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the people & workplace department

This book is written for employers. It will help you address skilled labour shortages in an increasingly tight labour market.

It presents:

- the business case to consider the cost of employee turnover
- information to help you plan how to attract, recruit, select and retain workers
- positive practices and strategies to help you attract, recruit, select and retain workers
- further information and resources.

This publication is available on-line through the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website—Alberta's leading on-line source for career, learning and employment information. To access this and additional publications, visit **www.alis.gov.ab.ca/careershop**

FINDERS KEEPERS, LOSERS WEEPERS?

... a whimsical introduction to a serious topic. In today's economy the truth is that those employers who are able to **find** and **keep** valued employees gain the upper hand in an increasingly competitive labour market. *Finders & Keepers* provides you with tools to take on that challenge. Whether your organization is small or large, for profit or not-for-profit, you will find here proven strategies and practical tools to help you attract, recruit, select and retain employees.

Acknowledgements

Finders & Keepers: Recruitment and Retention Strategies is produced by Alberta Human Resources and Employment in co-operation with the following other Government of Alberta departments: Community Development; Economic Development; Environment; Health and Wellness; Innovation and Science; Learning; and the Personnel Administration Office.

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- Alberta Association of Food Processors
- Alberta Building Trades Council
- Alberta Chambers of Commerce
- Alberta Construction Association
- Alberta Home Builders Association
- Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association
- Alberta Restaurant & Foodservices Association
- Banff/Lake Louise Hotel/Motel Association
- Canadian Association of Drilling Contractors
- Canadian Association of Geophysical Contractors
- Canadian Federation of Independent Business
- Canadian Information Processing Society
- DECSA (Distinctive Employment Counselling Services of Alberta)
- Economic Development Edmonton
- Human Resources Management Association of Edmonton
- Merit Contractors
- Provincial Health Authorities of Alberta
- United Way of Calgary and Area

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. New Realities for the Workforce 6
The challenge to find and keep good workers 6
The real cost of employee turnover 7

2. Attraction: How to Make Them Want You 9
What are employees looking for? 9
Become an employer of choice 10

3. Recruitment: Find the Talent You Need 12
Positive planning 12
Positive practices 15
Internal job postings 16
Employee referrals 16
Print advertisements 17
Internet recruiting 17
Third party recruiters 18
School connections 19
International recruiting 19

4. Selection: Make a Good Match 20
Positive planning 20
Positive practices 20
Application forms 20
Résumés 20
Interviews 21
Verifying the facts 24
Reference checks 24
Criminal record checks 24
Communicating with applicants 25

5. Retention: Keep Valued Employees 26
Positive planning 26
Positive practices 28
Orientation and integration 28
Training and development 30
Compensation and benefits 32
Recognition and rewards 34
Performance management 36
Work-life balance 37
Employee communication and participation 38
Safe, fair and healthy workplaces 39
Manager training and accountability 40
Saying goodbye 40

6. Human Rights and the Employer 42

7. Resources and Tools 44
Resources 4
Tools 45

1 NEW REALITIES FOR THE WORKFORCE

THE CHALLENGE TO FIND AND KEEP GOOD WORKERS

> **THE BOTTOM LINE** is we've expanded as much as we can right now until we get more people. We can't run at capacity now just because we don't have the people.
>
> *—Manager, bakery, Edmonton*

> **EMPLOYEE TURNOVER** is a huge issue for us, especially in this market. It soaks up a lot of my time and can't help but impact the quality of customer service.
>
> *—HR manager, hotel, Banff*

Sound familiar? If you are challenged to find and retain good workers, you are not alone. Two national surveys conducted by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business found that nearly half of all small- and medium-sized businesses in Canada consider a shortage of qualified labour to be a serious problem, and Alberta reported one of the highest rates of concern.

What's going on out there? Several things.

A strong economy. Alberta's strong economy continues to create jobs and fuel the demand for more workers.

Low unemployment. Alberta has consistently had a low unemployment rate and, in 2002, the province's annual average unemployment rate was the second lowest in the country at 5.3 per cent.

Some sectors especially feel the pinch. Even when the labour market is balanced overall, shortages can still occur in specific occupations. An example is the current shortage of workers being reported in the residential construction sector.

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An aging population. Baby boomers, born between 1945 and 1966, are the age group in Alberta with the largest number of people. As they retire, their sheer numbers may be difficult to replace.

Global competition. It's not just Alberta businesses that are competing for talent in this labour market—increasingly workers have opportunities to take their skills elsewhere. Growing use of the Internet as a job search tool has provided easy access to employment listings around the world.

Shifting loyalties. Workers' loyalty to their employers has diminished along with their prospects for lifetime employment. Employees expect they will be working for more than one employer in their lifetime.

On the move. One recent Canadian study revealed that more than one-half of workers were open to moving to another job, and most set no minimum time to have to stay with one employer.

The net effect for you, the business owner or agency manager, is tough competition with other Alberta organizations for a limited and precious resource: *people.* High turnover can result, with major implications for the success and even sustainability of your business. What's turnover costing you?

THE REAL COST OF EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

A quick calculation

Research demonstrates that the total cost of replacing an employee, counting direct and indirect costs, is within the range of 70 to 200 per cent of their salary. If we go with 100 per cent as a conservative cost estimate, you would calculate:

# of employees who left X average annual salary and benefits = annual cost of turnover

For example:

# of Employees	Position	Annual Salary & Benefits	Total
3	Production Worker	$25,000/year	$75,000
2	Line Supervisor	$40,000/year	$80,000
1	Personnel Administrator	$36,000/year	$36,000
1	VP: Sales and Marketing	$85,000/year	$85,000
Total			**$276,000**

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A careful accounting

Turnover includes both direct (measurable) costs and indirect (hidden) costs that are not so obvious, but potentially even more damaging to your business. This might include reduced customer satisfaction or the loss of valuable knowledge and expertise. To calculate the costs of turnover that are measurable, you need to consider many factors. The following example shows how these costs build, even for an entry-level employee. Clearly, from the perspectives of cost reduction and strategic planning, limiting turnover and increasing retention makes good business sense.

Estimated Turnover Costs for One Housekeeping Attendant*

**Estimates provided by one hotel in Alberta, based on assumption of two weeks notice and two weeks job vacancy.*

Direct Costs	# Hours	Hourly rate	Total
Termination			
Separation processing – administrative support	0.5 hour	$15	$7.50
Separation processing – management	2	$25	$50.00
Exit interviews – human resources staff or external consultant	1	$25	$25.00
Severance pay	n/a		
Accrued vacation			$400.00
Continued benefits	n/a		
Vacancy			
Temporary help – wages	64	$7	$448.00
Temp agency services	n/a		
Overtime for co-workers	n/a		
Recruitment			
Writing job ad	1	$25	$25.00
Running job ad			$75.00
Third party recruiter fees	n/a		
Other (e.g. referral bonus)	n/a		
Selection and hiring			
Application screening	0.5 hour	$25	$12.50
Interviewing	3	$25	$75.00
Reference check	1.5 hour	$25	$40.00
Finalizing employee contract	0.5 hour	$25	$12.50
Relocation	n/a		
Other (e.g. signing bonus)	n/a		

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Direct Costs	# hours	Hourly rate	Total
Orientation and training			
New hire processing (e.g. benefits set up)	1	$15	$15.00
Orientation	2	$25	$50.00
Orientation materials such as employee literature			$5.00
Uniforms, equipment			$50.00
In-house training or coaching	12	$11	$132.00
Training materials	n/a		
External training	n/a		
Other (e.g. licensing, certification fees)	n/a		
Total of Direct Costs			**$1422.50**

Indirect Costs	% Reduction	# Hours	Hourly rate	Total
Lost productivity of incumbent, prior to departure *(estimate 2 weeks prior to departure)*	50%	64	$7	$224.00
Lost productivity of co-workers or subordinates *(estimate 2 co-workers x 2 weeks)*	25%	128	$7	$224.00
Lost productivity/time of supervisor during vacancy *(2 weeks)*	30%	64	$11	$211.20
Lost productivity/time of supervisor during orientation and training	30%	40	$11	$132.00
Lost productivity of new hire during initial transition *(week 1)*	50%	32	$7	$112.00
Lost productivity of new hire during subsequent transition *(weeks 2 and 3)*	25%	64	$7	$112.00
Increased defects/operating errors during vacancy or transition *(example, overuse of chemicals, broken glass, damage to doors)*				$50.00
Dissatisfied or lost customers during vacancy or transition *(estimate 5 customers shorten stay by one night @ $140)*				$700.00
Total of Indirect Costs				1765.20
Total Costs of Turnover (Direct + Indirect)				$3187.70

What are the costs of turnover for your organization? If you would like to crunch your own numbers, turn to the blank template provided in *Resources and Tools* at the back of this book.

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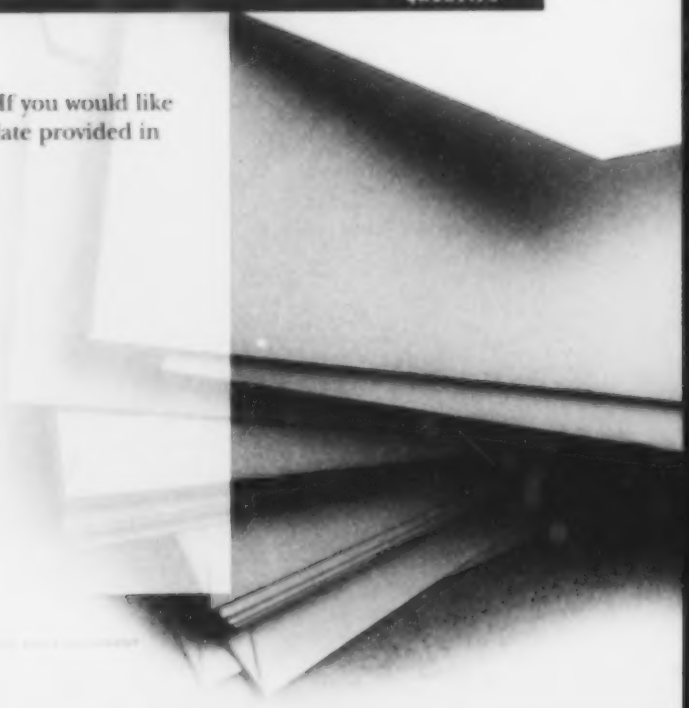


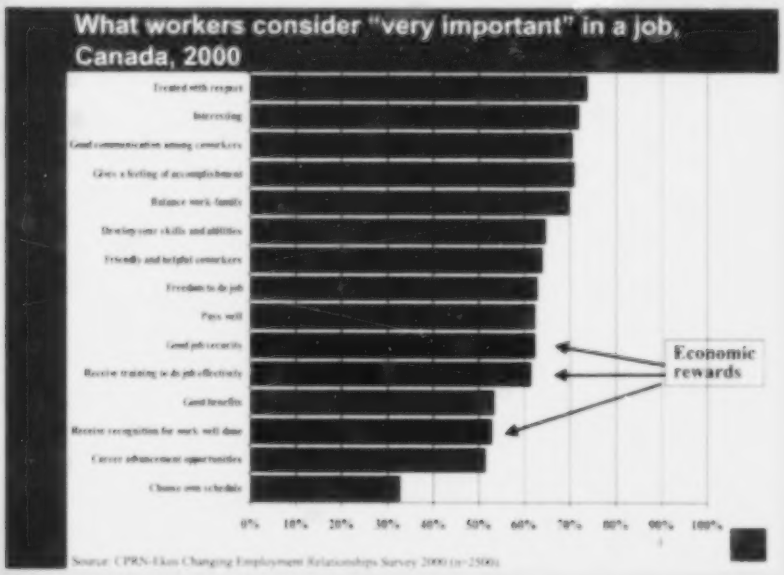
2 ATTRACTION: HOW TO MAKE THEM WANT YOU

WHAT ARE EMPLOYEES LOOKING FOR?

Positioning your organization and your job offer to be attractive to job applicants requires a good understanding of what potential employees are looking for in a job, in a workplace, in an employer. What are the critical elements?

"Show me the money?" Not necessarily...

Recent research revealed what Canadian employees are looking for in a job. Good pay, job security and benefits are, of course, an important part of the package, but they don't top the list. Canadian workers place an even higher value on being treated with respect, doing interesting work, a feeling of accomplishment and good communication among co-workers. This is good news for employers who may not be able to compete solely on the basis of pay and benefits.



Source: CPRN-Ekos Changing Employment Relationships Survey 2000 (n=2500).

Graham Lowe, *Job Quality: The Key to Attracting, Retaining and Developing Workers of All Ages*, CPRN and the University of Alberta, Keynote address to IPMA Canada, National Training Conference, Fredericton, N.B., May 16, 2001. Posted at: www.cprn.org/cprn.html

Note: This chart is based on data from the CPRN-EKOS Changing Employment Relationships Survey, 2000. For more information on this survey and for a complete summary of the survey findings, see Graham S. Lowe and Grant Schellenberg (2001) *What's a Good Job? The Importance of Employment Relationships*, CPRN Study No. W/05, Changing Employment Relationships Series. Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks.

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SMALL BUSINESSES OFTEN STRUGGLE to compete on salary and benefits but are usually rated much better on other intrinsic benefits such as flexibility, variety and scope of the work and access to decision-makers. This is the competitive edge they need to promote in hiring.

–Vice-President, small business association

IN OUR AGENCY, it's the organizational culture that attracts prospective employees. We're about helping people achieve their goals, and that is reflected in everything we do. In order to empower our clients, we have to first empower our staff with a shared sense of individual and social values. This creates a kind of energy that appeals to the values of the people we want working for us.

–Executive Director, not-for-profit agency, Edmonton

Managers matter

Manager quality—the manner, style, and effectiveness of the manager or supervisor an individual will directly report to—is another key consideration for job seekers. In fact, in one study of high-value employees this was *the* single most important factor influencing a career decision—the thing they would be least willing to trade away for another job benefit! Why does it matter so much? The manager sets the tone and has a primary role to play in communicating and reinforcing company values. All of the policies, positive practices and good intentions of an organization are lost if the frontline manager does not understand, accept and "walk the talk" when it comes to valuing, respecting and communicating with employees.

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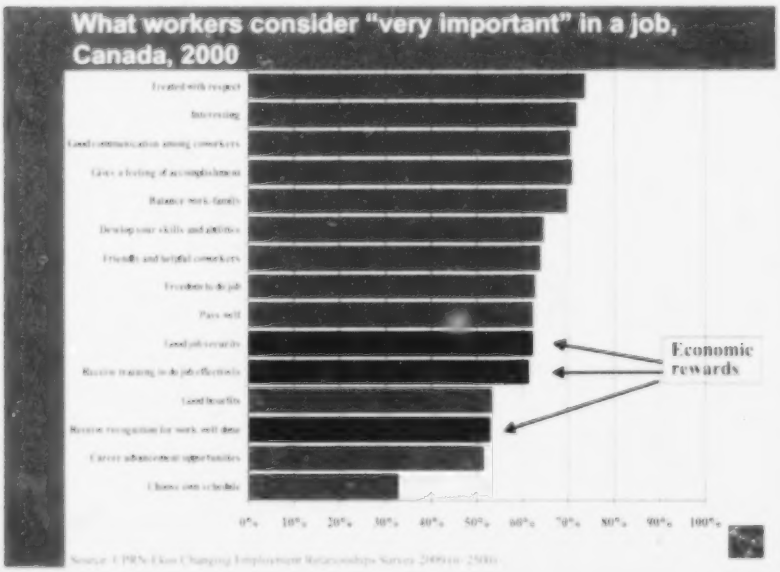

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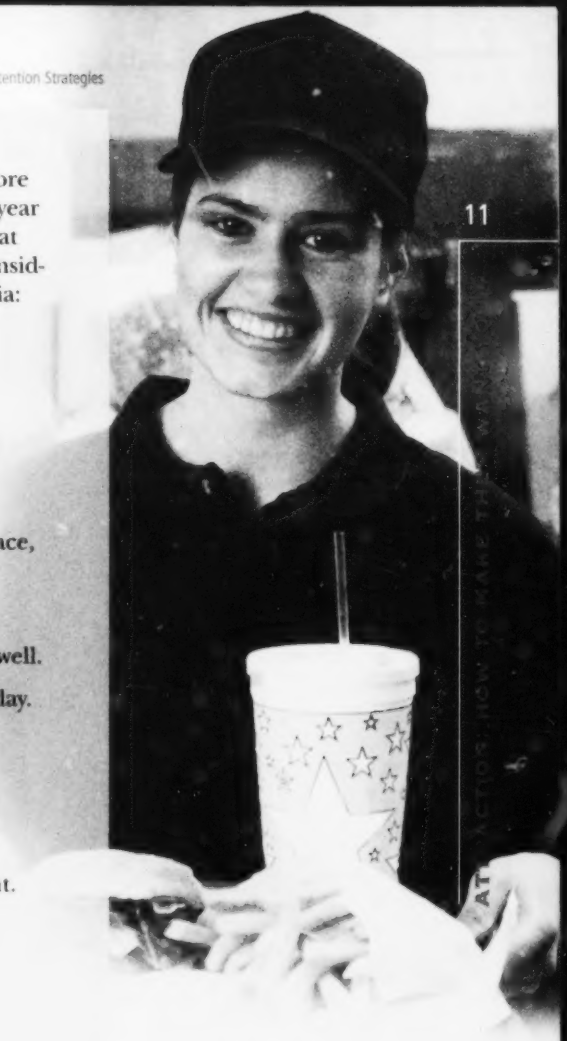
BECOME AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

Are you an "employer of choice"? If you are, job applicants seek you out. They call you first when starting a job search because they have heard that your organization is a great place to work. They choose you before you choose them. You may have a waiting list of interested applicants because your turnover rate is lower than the industry average. What's your secret? According to research (see **www.jobquality.ca**), your organization is very likely to offer some or all of the following:

- training and development opportunities
- a safe working environment
- a healthy working environment
- responsive scheduling
- positive employee-supervisor relationships
- reasonable job demands
- competitive pay and benefits
- employee communication and influence
- personally rewarding work
- job security
- thoughtful job design.

IN MY TEN YEARS OF OWNING THIS COMPANY I believe I've had two staff leave. Almost everyone we've hired has come to us through word of mouth. What do we do? We meet regularly and keep them involved as to where the company is going. We give them the freedom of voice to tell us what we are good at and where we need to improve. We operate on a trust principle—I don't even keep track of their hours or sick days and trust them to take care of it. They always do.

–Owner/operator, advertising agency, Stony Plain



Another study conducted by the Gallup Organization involved more than 80,000 managers from more than 400 companies in a multi-year study. They were asked to answer the question "What makes a great workplace?" Each of the companies involved in the study were considered "great" if they had demonstrated strengths in four key criteria:

1. employee retention
2. customer satisfaction
3. productivity
4. profitability.

That research resulted in identifying 12 criteria of a great workplace, written from the perspective of an employee:

1. I know what is expected of me at work.
2. I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work well.
3. At work I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.
4. In the last seven days I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.
5. My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.
6. There is someone at work who encourages my development.
7. At work my opinions seem to count.
8. The mission or purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important.
9. My associates (fellow employees) are committed to doing high quality work.
10. I have a best friend at work (a trusting relationship with a co-worker).
11. In the last six months someone at work has talked to me about my progress.
12. This last year I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.

Like to know how you would rate in the eyes of your employees? Ask your staff to evaluate your organization based on these 12 criteria. Then, be prepared to act on what you learn. The steps you take to move in this direction will pay off with reduced turnover.

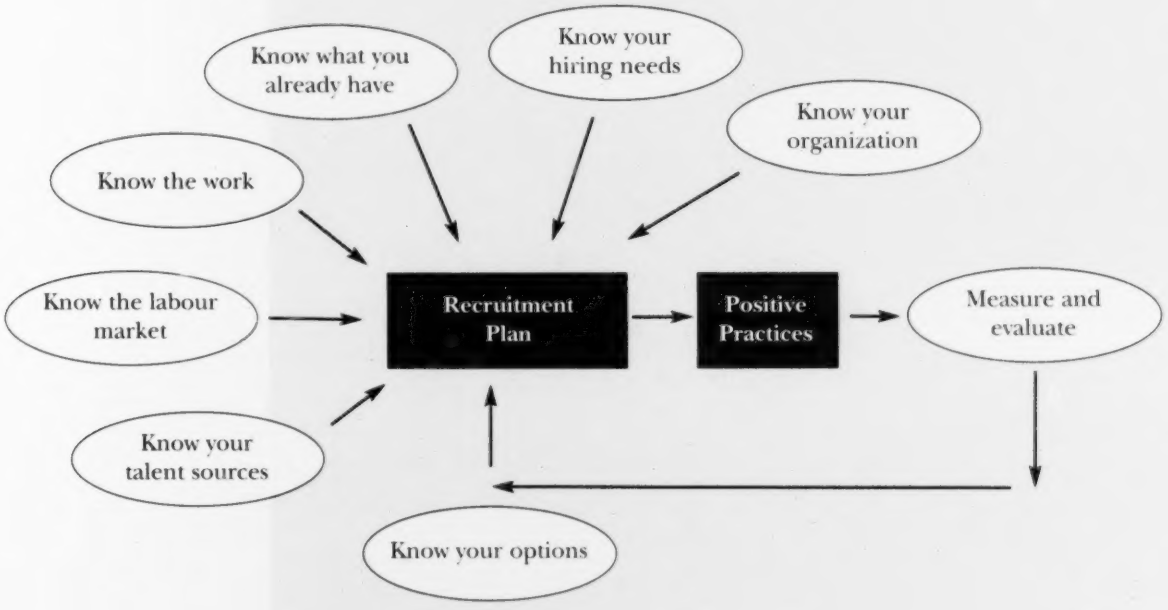
TRACTION: HOW TO MAKE

3 RECRUITMENT: FIND THE TALENT YOU NEED

POSITIVE PLANNING

Every workplace is unique. It is important for you to understand and define the values, goals, policies, and practices that describe your organization. If you can clearly express who you are and what you're looking for, your recruitment efforts will be more successful because prospective applicants can assess their "fit" with your needs. Use the unique characteristics of your organization to your advantage and promote them as a selling point in your recruitment efforts. A solid recruitment plan, careful attention to selection and ongoing commitment to retention mean that you will need to spend less time, energy and money replacing staff.

Good recruitment begins with good planning. Before you get started, ask yourself some important questions. Take the time to find out the answers before you place that ad or post the "help wanted" sign. The following graphic highlights some of the important topics you need to consider before moving ahead.



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Know your organization

- What is your organizational culture (norms, values, traditions)?
- What is your organization's vision and mission?
- What do you have to offer employees?
- Why would someone want to work in your organization?

Know your hiring needs

- What's coming up that might create the need to hire new workers? For example, increased sales or new product lines, new technology, anticipated turnover.
- Who or what can provide you with this information? For example, strategic plans, sales reports, records of past hiring patterns, line managers and others "in the know."
- What skills or qualities will benefit your organization? For example, having staff who speak other languages represented in your customer base.

Know what you already have

- What skills and abilities do your current employees have?
- What members of your staff might be able to meet future skills needs, with training and support?
- Could work reorganization or job re-design meet your needs, rather than hiring?

Know the work

- What are the main tasks?
- Who will the person report to?
- What are the key responsibilities?
- What knowledge, skills and attitudes are required?
- What experience, special skills or qualifications are essential?
- What experience, special skills or qualifications are nice to have?

Know the labour market

- What is the supply and demand of workers "out there" ?
- What skills are in short supply?
- What companies or industries are you competing with for labour?
- What's a competitive salary for this kind of work?

You might be able to answer these questions, in part, by reading the local newspaper and talking to business colleagues...

In addition, you can access a wealth of current, accurate labour market information through Alberta Human Resources and Employment and the Government of Canada. See the *Resources and Tools* section at the end of this book for websites and contact information.

Writing job descriptions—sound like work?

The task is much easier with OCCINFO—the government of Alberta's database of occupational profiles that provide generic descriptions of occupations you can draw from. Check it out—some of the work may already be done for you! **www.alis.gov.ab.ca/occinfo**

See the sample job description in the *Resources and Tools* section of this book.

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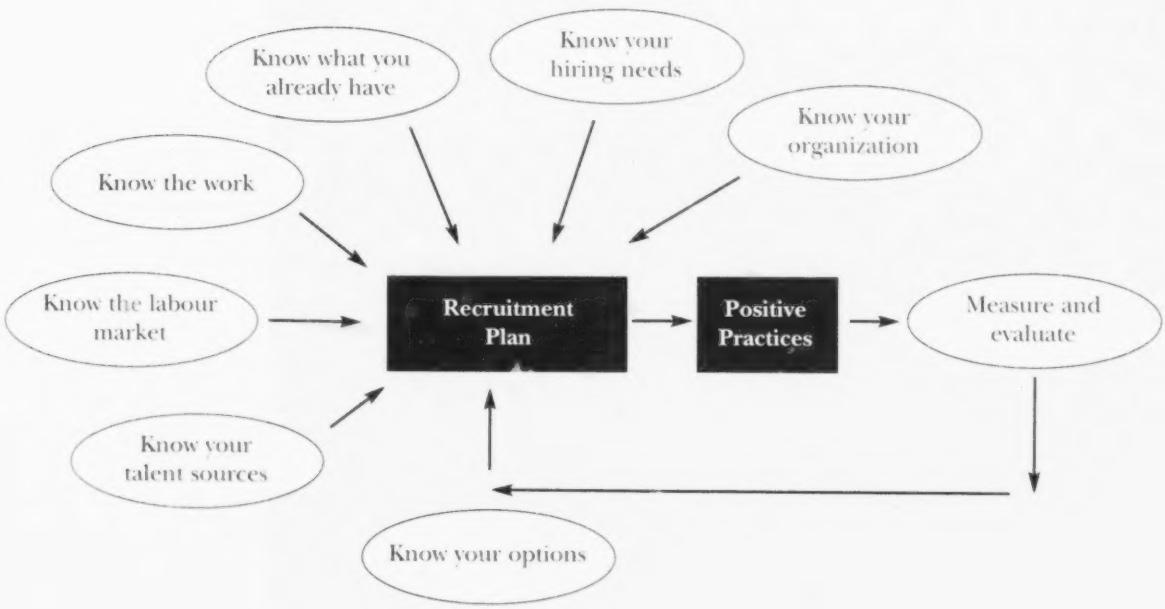
POSITIVE PLANNING

Every workplace is unique. It is important for you to understand and define the values, goals, policies, and practices that describe your organization. If you can clearly express who you are and what you're looking for, your recruitment efforts will be more successful because prospective applicants can assess their "fit" with your needs. Use the unique characteristics of your organization to your advantage and promote them as a selling point in your recruitment efforts. A solid recruitment plan, careful attention to selection and ongoing commitment to retention mean that you will need to spend less time, energy and money replacing staff.

Good recruitment begins with good planning. Before you get started, ask yourself some important questions. Take the time to find out the answers before you place that ad or post the "help wanted" sign. The following graphic highlights some of the important topics you need to consider before moving ahead.



Know your organization

- What is your organizational culture (norms, values, traditions)?
- What is your organization's vision and mission?
- What do you have to offer employees?
- Why would someone want to work in your organization?

Know your hiring needs

- What's coming up that might create the need to hire new workers? For example, increased sales or new product lines, new technology, anticipated turnover.
- Who or what can provide you with this information? For example, strategic plans, sales reports, records of past hiring patterns, line managers and others "in the know."
- What skills or qualities will benefit your organization? For example, having staff who speak other languages represented in your customer base.

Know what you already have

- What skills and abilities do your current employees have?
- What members of your staff might be able to meet future skills needs, with training and support?
- Could work reorganization or job re-design meet your needs, rather than hiring?

Know the work

- What are the main tasks?
- Who will the person report to?
- What are the key responsibilities?
- What knowledge, skills and attitudes are required?
- What experience, special skills or qualifications are essential?
- What experience, special skills or qualifications are nice to have?

Know the labour market

- What is the supply and demand of workers "out there" ?
- What skills are in short supply?
- What companies or industries are you competing with for labour?
- What's a competitive salary for this kind of work?

You might be able to answer these questions, in part, by reading the local newspaper and talking to business colleagues...

In addition, you can access a wealth of current, accurate labour market information through Alberta Human Resources and Employment and the Government of Canada. See the *Resources and Tools* section at the end of this book for websites and contact information.

Writing job descriptions—sound like work?

The task is much easier with OCCINFO—the government of Alberta's database of occupational profiles that provide generic descriptions of occupations you can draw from. Check it out—some of the work may already be done for you! **www.alis.gov.ab.ca/occinfo**

See the sample job description in the *Resources and Tools* section of this book.

Know your talent sources

As you plan your talent search, be creative. Rather than targeting the same workers and using the same strategies as everyone else, consider your options. All of the following populations face barriers to employment and may have a lot to offer your organization.

Aboriginal people
Within a decade, one out of every five new entrants into the labour market will be Aboriginal. With rising educational and skill levels, they offer a growing source of skills and knowledge.

Immigrants
Immigrants make up about 15 per cent of the Alberta workforce, and the majority of immigrants who come to Alberta are skilled workers with expertise across a range of occupations.

Older workers
The number of older workers in the labour force is steadily increasing. Job turnover is lower among older workers and they have a wealth of experience to contribute.

Persons with disabilities
Persons with disabilities offer an established track record of being reliable, productive and innovative workers.

Visible minorities
Statistics show that visible minorities as a percentage of the population are growing faster than the total population. This group has many highly educated and skilled workers; however, visible minorities still face some barriers to employment.

Youth
Alberta youth (aged 15–24) experience more than double the rate of unemployment than their older counterparts. Even well qualified young people with strong academic skills can often have difficulty finding a job.

Women
While unemployment rates are consistent between genders in Alberta, there is unequal representation in certain industries and occupations.

> **IF YOU HIRE PEOPLE** just like you, you're going to get more of what you've got. I have made a point of hiring people from different cultures, heritage, educational backgrounds. It's a mosaic. That's what you want—you want this palette that has all of this diversity.
>
> *–President/CEO, advertising agency, Lethbridge*

Good reads to help employers address skilled labour shortages:

- *Diversity: A strategy to meet your need for skilled worker*
- *Employment Series for Persons with Disabilities: Tips for Employers*
- *Rejuvenating Your Business*

To get copies, see the *Resources and Tools* section at the end of this book.

Know your options

- What recruitment strategies can you consider? (Hint: See the *Positive Practices* section that follows.)
- Which options suit your corporate culture?
- Which options would your staff support? (Ask them.)
- What resources (time, money, people) do you have to support each option?

Measure and evaluate

This step might be as simple as adding the question "How did you hear about us?" to the application form or interview process. Record keeping using a chart like the following template will help you evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies you choose in terms of cost, speed or outcomes. Having the chart ready at the onset of your recruitment campaign will help you track costs and results from "day one."

Recruitment strategy	Cost	# Responses	# Interviewed	# Hired	Average response time	Cost per hire (cost ÷ # hired)
Newspaper ad						
Electronic job bank						
Recruitment agency						
Other						

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POSITIVE PRACTICES

The following chart presents a selection of recruitment practices that are well-suited for small- to medium-sized businesses and not-for-profit organizations. Also included are some key points that will factor into their success. As you consider your options, keep in mind:

- One plan does not fit all. What works well for the place down the road might not work in your situation. Find the right fit for you.
- One strategy is not enough. A healthy recruitment plan includes a mix of strategies.
- It might take tinkering. Monitor the results of your efforts, asking for input from current employees and new recruits.

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Strategy	Description	Pros & Cons	Success Factors
Internal job postings	• Employer posts a description of job openings for all or selected positions • Interested and qualified employees apply	**Pros:** • Enhances development opportunities for staff • Limited investment of time and money • Promotes good employee relations • Minimizes accusations of unfair treatment or discrimination **Cons:** • The skills you require may not be "in house" • Does not provide for "new blood," new skills • Unsupportive supervisors may block employee participation	• Develop and fully communicate a policy on job postings, including what kinds of jobs are posted, where, when and how, the applicant review and feedback process and the appeals procedure. • Postings should include: eligibility requirements such as minimum length in current position; length of posting period; and how to apply. • Job postings should state the need to balance individual career goals with organizational priorities. • Coach supervisors to support the process.
Employee referrals	• Incentives and rewards offered to existing staff for recruiting new employees	**Pros:** • Makes a recruiter out of every employee • Referrals are in effect "pre-screened" by the referring employee • Employees typically recommend a good quality of hire • Limited cost per hire **Cons:** • Conflict may result over two employees making the same referral • May not increase recruitment of a diverse workforce • May be seen as a "closed shop" • Time, energy and creativity required to administer, communicate and celebrate the program	• Make the program a fundamental part of your workplace culture and celebrate successes. • Clearly and regularly communicate the purpose, goals, procedures of the employee referral program. • Develop an employee referral form and make copies readily available. • Coach employees on making good referrals. • Allow employees a choice of rewards (e.g. cash bonuses, weekends away, charitable donations) that are attractive but not so large as to encourage poor referrals. • Offer a prize draw for all employees who made referrals, successful or not. • Set a regular time for payment of the referral bonus (e.g. 90 days after hire or a percentage at onset of hire, remainder at 90 days).

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES *continued*

Strategy	Description	Pros & Cons	Success Factors
Print ads	• Place an ad in a newspaper, magazine or trade journal	**Pros:** • Widely used resource by job seekers • Quick way to reach a wide audience • "Public face" can serve to advertise the organization's success, growth **Cons** • Can be very expensive • Response rates can vary widely • Additional time required to wait for responses and screen unsuitable applicants	• Carefully select the publication and section to reach the people you want to hire. • Understand your audience. Envision the perfect candidate and write the ad with them in mind. • Comparison shop. Look at other ads and "choose the best, change the rest" to make your ad stand out. • Use positive, upbeat wording but in a tone that matches your corporate culture (e.g. if "fun" or "professionalism" is important to your organization, the ad should reflect that value). • Concentrate on the details of the job. • Stress opportunities. • Be realistic in your description and your expectations. • Don't forget essential details like the address, when and how to respond, closing deadline. • Pilot test the ad with someone in your target audience outside the organization. Does it make sense to them? Does it make them want to work for you? • Track the results. Are you getting the responses you need?
Internet recruiting	• Employers post jobs or check résumés on job boards, on the organization website, or other sites, such as industry or professional associations	**Pros:** • Rapidly increasing in popularity • Access to a global market • Low cost per hire • Instant communication—no lag time for responses • Anywhere/anytime access for job seekers • Job ads can be considerably longer (up to two pages in length) • Job ads can be easily and more regularly updated • Longer ad run—typically 30 days, versus one or two days for traditional ads • Levels the playing field for small and large companies and not-for-profits • Ease of response may encourage "passive seekers"—those currently employed who might consider a move • Massive volume of databases and search options available • Technology facilitates broad searching and focused screening • Recruitment from own web site offers the opportunity to promote the organization and corporate values	**Posting job ads** • Consider government job banks such as Canada-Alberta JOBS at *www.jobbank.gc.ca* or job sites such as *Workopolis.com* • Specialized "niche sites" offered by industry or professional associations, educational institutions and other interest groups can be very helpful in targeting specific sectors or skills. (e.g. *www.healthjobs.ab.ca*) • Evaluate commercial employment centres before posting on them. Consider: - attractiveness and navigability of the site - volume of traffic they receive - degree of market share and advertising quantity and quality - purpose or reason for being in this business - speed of downloading from the site - number and quality of links from or to the site - number and type of occupational categories - search criteria options (e.g. location, job category)

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RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES *continued*

Strategy	Description	Pros & Cons	Success Factors
Internet recruiting *(continued)*		**Cons:** • Massive volume of databases and search options can be overwhelming • Only reaches applicants who are computer literate • Even computer literate may get lost in cyberspace if not adept at navigating the net • Employers and recruiters need to be skilled in conducting Internet searches • Full utilization may require upgrading and integrating of technical infrastructure • Can be difficult to choose the "best" site and get the right exposure	- reputation, length of time in business - user support services provided • Use standard terms and keywords in the job title. • Develop an ad template including organizational description, job description, job requirements and benefits. • Develop an automated response to acknowledge every applicant. **Searching for talent** • Try out different search engines to see which give you the best results. • Choose good quality key words. • Experiment with different combinations of key words to get the best results. Add key words one at a time separated by "and" and "or". • Check on Monday mornings as many résumés are posted over the weekend. • Call soon! And have a form letter ready to send out to job candidates. **Recruiting from your website** • Add a careers section to your home page, featuring upcoming job openings and/or encouraging applications at any time. • Provide on-line application forms. • Ensure your URL is included wherever your organization's name is printed. • Link your job postings to other parts of your website that may attract the reader (e.g. local amenities).
Third party recruiters	• Employment agencies who refer candidates and charge a fee if a placement is made • Executive search firms paid on a retainer basis	**Pros:** • Offloads work to an outside party • Often more time-effective • Applicants are pre-screened • Recruiters sometimes have access to, and more success with, currently employed candidates **Cons:** • More expensive option • Quality of service may vary • Recruiters may pressure applicants or managers for a fast fit	• Choose the agency carefully—this recruiter will represent you. Check references, track record, consider several service providers before making your decision. • Look for recruiters with specific expertise in the skills and labour market you are interested in. • Carefully define contractual terms in writing (e.g. pricing, timelines, performance measures). • Work with several recruiters, if possible. • Keep careful records to verify the source of the referral and date of application.

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RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES *continued*

Strategy	Description	Pros & Cons	Success Factors
Contacts through schools	• Recruiting in high school, post-secondary and private training institutions (e.g. career fairs, co-op or apprenticeship programs)	**Pros:** • Allows you to target people with specific qualifications • Allows you to target younger workers • Potential to fill seasonal needs • Can lead to long-term employment **Cons:** • Career fairs require good planning and can be costly in terms of display materials and people required to host the display • Small organizations can be overshadowed • Must manage expectations if you do not have current job openings	• Connect with campus career centres or placement services to ask how you can participate and recruit through them. • Forge partnerships with local high schools and post-secondary institutions (e.g. sponsor a student in a RAP (Registered Apprenticeship Program), work experience or co-op program). • Offer worksite tours. • Participate in career fairs. • Contact teachers and facilitators of evening or extension courses.
International recruiting	• Recruiting and hiring workers from outside of Canada	**Pros:** • A means to acquire necessary skills and expertise • Adds a cross-cultural and international perspective to your business • Potential to build relationships with foreign partners and markets **Cons:** • Time and work required for due process • Foreign credentials may not be recognized here • Process can take several months or years • Workers are granted a temporary work permit for one year. Permission to extend the permit must be made each year	• Contact your nearest HRDC office (Human Resources Development Canada) to determine your eligibility. • Check out the *Temporary Foreign Worker Program* and *Alberta's Provincial Nominee Pilot Program* (see *Resources and Tools* section). • Consult job and résumé banks around the globe. • Contact visa officers at Canadian embassies around the world to advertise positions and conduct interviews. Candidates apply for a work permit through the nearest Canadian embassy.

I BELONG TO A HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE established through our professional association. We have monthly meetings that allow the members to get to know each other better. If one company is looking for people we have a link to contact other companies to see if they have any extra personnel.

–HR Manager, geophysical contractor, Calgary

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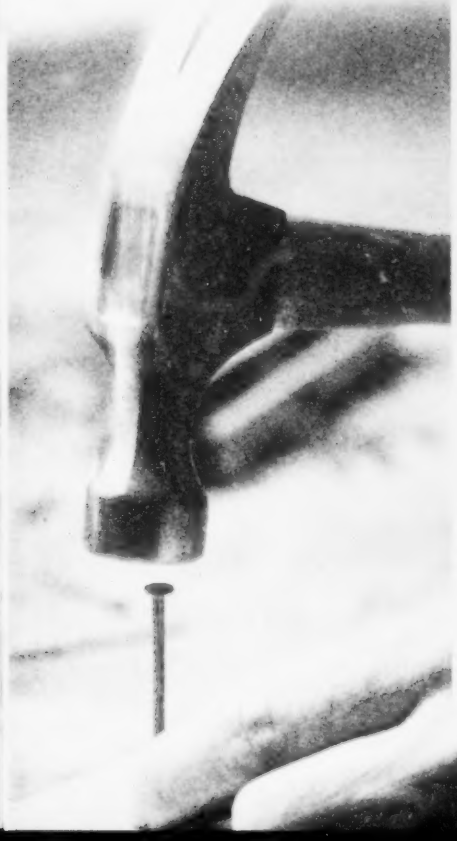
MAKE A GOOD MATCH

POSITIVE PLANNING

Selection is the pivot point between recruitment and retention. Hopefully your efforts have gained you several qualified candidates. Now you have to decide who is the best fit for the job. You need to plan a process that is fair and objective and results in choosing the best person for the job. Taking some time to plan ahead will help you to find an individual whose skills and talents will be an asset to your organization, a person who will want to keep you as an employer as well.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF A BAD HIRE?

Well, you already put in time and money to find and select them. Then if it looks like they aren't a good fit you could re-post the job, interview and hire someone new, invest money in training and have more absenteeism or lower performance during this period. Then you start from the beginning all over again. And if they are a bad fit, will they damage customer or employee relationships? Your reputation as a leader?



Using an accurate, current job description as a starting point, ask yourself a few questions:

- What are the "must-haves" (the non-negotiables—things applicants must already have)?
- What are the "nice-to-haves" (things I could do without for now, things applicants can learn)?
- How will I really know if the applicant has these skills or traits?
- What tools will I need to make my decision (e.g. application forms, behavioural interview questions, reference checklist)?

4 SELECTION: MAKE A GOOD MATCH

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THE CONSEQUENCES OF A BAD HIRE?

Well, you already put in time and money to find and select them. Then if it looks like there isn't a good fit you want to give them the benefit of the doubt, so you may invest months of training and have more downtime or lesser performance during this period. Then you have to start the process all over again. And if this person has a role in serving customers, you may even have damaged your reputation as a business.

–President/CEO, home builder, Calgary

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POSITIVE PRACTICES

This section presents a variety of selection strategies along with guidelines for how to implement them successfully.

Application forms

A job application form is a useful way to gather consistent and objective information. They can be easily posted to the corporate website or left at reception for walk-in inquiries. Applications may encourage a higher response rate because they are easier and faster to complete than résumés. Good forms are written in plain language and laid out in a clear format with sufficient space to encourage a complete response.

Alberta human rights legislation prohibits asking applicants questions about their race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical and/or mental disability, marital status, family status, source of income, age, ancestry, place of origin or sexual orientation. Obtain a Pre-Employment Inquiries Guide and Information Sheet from the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission listed in the *Resources and Tools* section or use their confidential inquiry line to check whether the wording of your application is discriminatory.

Résumés

Some companies ask applicants to submit résumés in addition to, or instead of, application forms. There are several different types of résumés, all designed to create a favorable and accurate picture of the individual. Résumés offer several advantages to the applicant and the employer. Results achieved can be more easily highlighted or effectively described, offering useful information for a follow-up interview. The writing style and language may convey information about the applicant, including their level of literacy and attention to detail.

The downside of résumés is that it can be more challenging to find and compare information. Also, the reviewer may be biased, positively or negatively, by the appearance of the résumé. As well, negative information such as unexplained employment gaps can be more easily concealed in a résumé.

Interviews

Once you have selected applicants who seem to be most closely matched to the job, you can then add the human element—a face-to-face meeting between the individual and one or more people from your organization. A good interview provides a useful exchange of information between you and the applicant and allows both parties to judge if there is a good fit.

There are two common types of interviews:

- the Behavioural Descriptive Interview
- the Situational Interview.

In the Behavioural Descriptive Interview the premise is that a person's past performance is the best predictor of how they will perform in the future. Questions focus on how the applicant has applied his or her skills, attitudes or expertise in past experiences.

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Examples of behavioural questions include:

- Give me an example of a workplace change or improvement you initiated?
- What were the reasons or context for that change?
- What were barriers you encountered and how did you overcome these?
- What were the benefits of this change? To the organization? To individuals?
- What did you do to get support for this change?
- What did you learn that you would apply to a similar situation?

The Situational Interview is based on future, hypothetical situations. This style assumes that behavioural intentions (how you anticipate you would behave in a certain situation) are the best predictor of future performance.

Examples of situational interview questions include:

- How would you respond to a customer who told you he was unhappy with his order?
- What would you do if you came across a liquid spill on the shop floor?
- What steps would you take in the event of a product recall?
- If you had to work with three different departments with different priorities, how would you handle that?
- How would you manage a situation where you had to supervise employees who were in conflict with each other?
- If you became a supervisor here, how would you describe your philosophy and approach?

Other good questions to ask during an interview include:

- Why do you want to work here?
- What is most important to you in a job?
- Describe three of your best personal strengths.
- What type of supervisory style do you prefer?
- What is the most important skill for a manager to have?
- What areas of personal development would you like to work on in the next year?

A rating guide is a good idea when it comes to evaluating and comparing the results of an interview process. Rating guides serve to increase objectivity, focus the interviewers' attention on key points and facilitate discussion and comparison between members of an interview panel. A sample rating guide is provided in the *Resources and Tools* section of this book.

Interviewing Tips

Whatever interview style you choose, there are common tips to follow.

Before the Interview

Develop an accurate, concise job description

Involve the "experts", people in the job right now, people who will work closely with the new employee.

Establish the selection criteria

Consider performance experience, personal traits, applicable tests.
TIP: Ensure that criteria are fair and relevant to job.

Decide type of interview to use

Behavioural descriptive
Situational
Other, or a combination

Plan the interview

Review the résumé and/or application form.
Develop the specific questions related to the job and the résumé or application.
TIP: Field test questions before using them in an interview.

Plan the interview format

Will it be an individual or panel?
Decide who will interview and assign questions.

Develop a rating scale to assess each candidate after the interview

Decide if work samples and demonstration of skills should be part of interview.

During the Interview

Set the tone

Keep it relaxed with sufficient time for the interview.
Offer coffee or water.
Explain the interview process and format.
Provide information about the job and the organization.

Ask questions

They are usually open ended, followed by probing.
Questions should be preplanned and job-focused.
Questions should help to get a clear picture of the individual's knowledge, skills and attitudes as they relate to the job under consideration.

Order the questions

Go from the general to the specific.
Begin with easy questions and move to more difficult ones.
Start with common topics saving more sensitive questions for later.

What can you ask in an interview? What can't you ask?

The Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission has this information and more at **www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/publications/Information_Sheets/Info_Pre-employ_Inquiries.asp**

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Whatever interview style you choose, there are common tips to follow.

Before the Interview

Develop the necessary—maybe job description

Involve the "experts"—people in the job right now, people who will work closely with the new employee.

Establish the selection criteria

Consider performance experience, personal traits, applicable tests.
TIP: Ensure that criteria are fair and relevant to job.

Decide type of interview to use

Behavioral description
Situational
Other, or a combination

Plan the interview

Review the resume and/or application form.
Develop the specific questions related to the job and the resume or application.
TIP: Field test questions before using them in an interview.

Plan the interview format

Will it be an individual or panel?
Decide who will interview and assign questions.

Develop a rating scale to assess each candidate after the interview

Decide if work samples and demonstrations of skills should be part of interview.

During the Interview

Set the tone

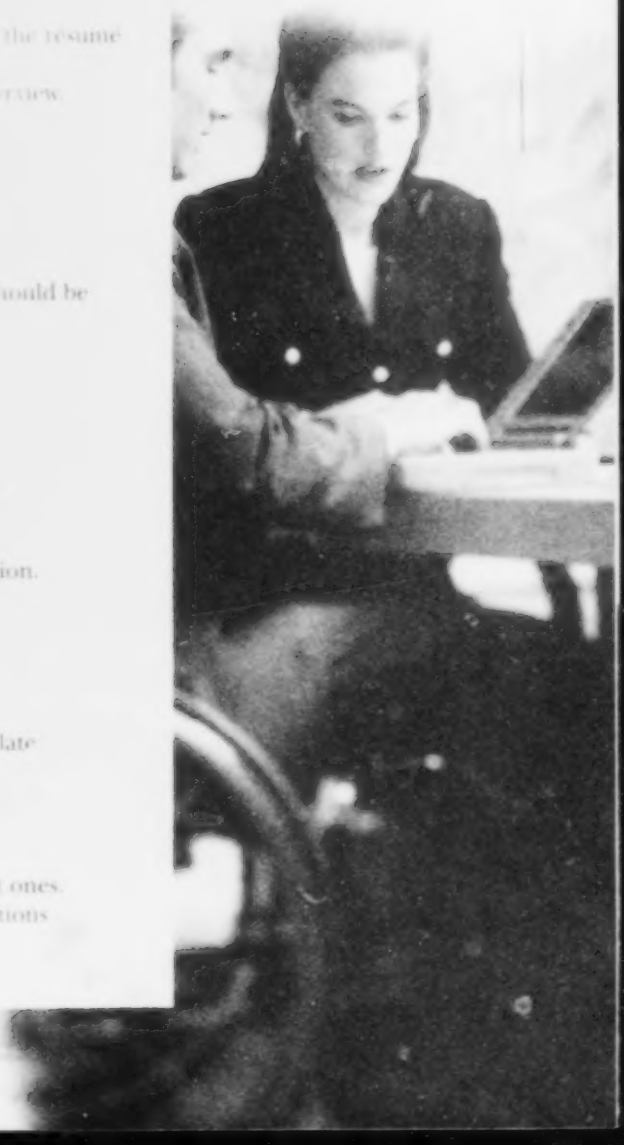
Keep it relaxed with sufficient time for the interview.
Offer coffee or water.
Explain the interview process and format.
Provide information about the job and the organization.

Ask questions

They are usually open ended, followed by probing.
Questions should be preplanned and job-focused.
Questions should help to get a clear picture of the individual's knowledge, skills and attitudes as they relate to the job under consideration.

Order the questions

Go from the general to the specific.
Begin with easy questions and move to more difficult ones.
Start with common topics saving more sensitive questions for later.



Provide useful information

Present a clear, realistic description of the job.
Give a sense of what is important to this job.

Check yourself

What are your biases and assumptions?
TIP: Give the person at least 30 minutes before you make a judgment.
TIP: Avoid being strongly biased, negatively or positively, and talking too much.

Use active listening techniques

Paraphrase, probe, clarify.
Allow pauses to facilitate reflection, expanding on thoughts.

Close on a positive note

Tell the candidate about the next steps.
Confirm names of references and ask permission to contact them.

After the Interview

Rate and compare each interviewee

Use an objective, job-focused rating scale.
Consult with other interviewers.

Do reference checks on serious choices

Confirm the candidate's information.
Explore discrepancies and what has not been said.
Take negative comments seriously.

Make a selection based on selection criteria

TIP: An 80 per cent match enables growth on the job.
The criteria should be flexible but not arbitrary.

Offer the job

By letter and through personal communication.
TIP: By speaking to the selected candidate you can convey feelings such as enthusiasm and welcome.

Notify unsuccessful applicants

Consider that you may want to re-interview these applicants for another or future position.
TIP: The unsuccessful applicants may be ambassadors or customers for your organization. Treat them respectfully.

Review the interview process

What worked well?
What would you do again?
What would you do differently?

Verifying the facts

It's very natural for applicants to want to put their best foot forward. This means that sometimes, perhaps unintentionally, truths may be stretched or there may be errors and omissions. You may need to put your investigator's hat on to fill in the gaps. Track irregularities in applications or look for résumé gaps or omissions in employment history, conflicting dates and details and the "gaping white space of what is not said."

Reference checks

Checking references is not a "nice to do"; it is a critical part of due diligence as an employer. Do you want to leave yourself open to charges of negligence for failing to provide a safe workplace by hiring a dangerous person? Good references are people who can judge the applicant's performance. This includes supervisors, customers, clients, co-workers. Telephone references are more effective because written references may be favourably biased.

Some companies do have a policy of not providing any information other than absolute factual information such as the dates that the person worked for them, the job title, salary, etc. This is usually for fear of libel suits. However, it is important to try to get beyond that. A release form signed by the candidate authorizing you to contact past employers may be helpful.

> **IN REFERENCE CHECKS YOU HAVE** to listen carefully to what is NOT said. There is a language that is used...comments like "I'd rather not comment on that" or "I refuse to answer that question" or "You'll have to ask someone else to give you an answer on that one". It's the stuff between the lines that speaks volumes.
>
> *–President/CEO, electrical contractor, Edmonton*

Criminal record checks

A background check is usually conducted only after a conditional letter of offer has been made. Typically, the purpose of this step is to determine if the candidate has a criminal record in cases where the position may involve, for example, working with money or serving as a caregiver. The applicant must give written consent for the background check, often included on the application form.

Communicating with applicants

Once you have made your decision, it is best to provide the successful candidate with a written letter of offer. Typically, the letter of offer will include details about:

- position title and description
- start date
- salary
- hours of work
- vacation
- compensation package
- reporting requirements
- probationary period.

As a courtesy, a short written letter should also go out to each unsuccessful applicant. There is no obligation to provide a reason for your decision to hire another person; however, the letter should be respectful and leave the door open to consider them for future employment.

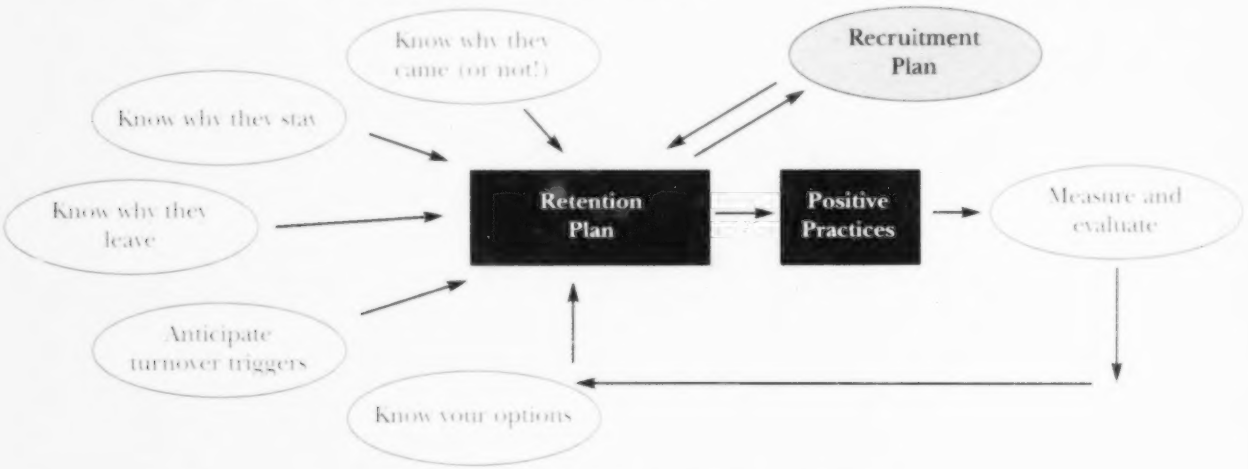
5 RETENTION – KEEP VALUED EMPLOYEES

POSITIVE PLANNING

Good retention doesn't just happen. It is the result of planning and forethought and careful attention to what matters most to the people who work for you. Create a work environment where people want to come and stay. What does it look like? Consider again the factors listed in the *Attraction* section of this book that describe an "employer of choice."

Your retention plan will follow workers from "entrance to exit." Good retention plans are also "top to bottom" with buy-in and accountability at all levels of the organization. The recruitment plan discussed in the section *Recruitment: Find the Talent You Need* is an important part of any retention plan. Each informs and impacts the other.

What are the critical elements of a retention plan? Read on…



Know why they came (or not!)

Interviews and surveys of new hires may provide you with rich information about what draws people to your organization—things you can highlight and build upon. It can also tell you areas for improvement, by asking about any hesitations they may have had and how they felt about the selection and orientation process.

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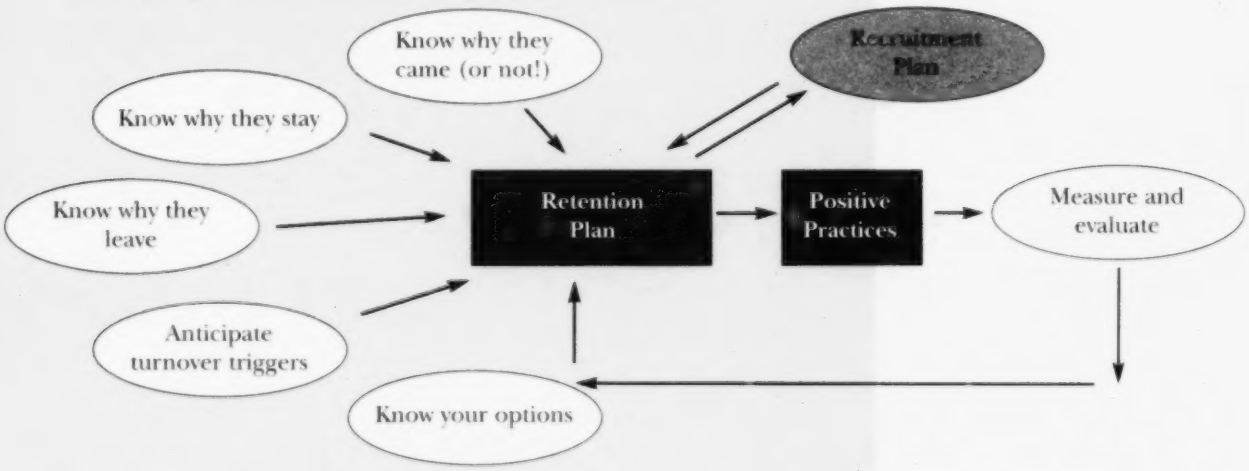

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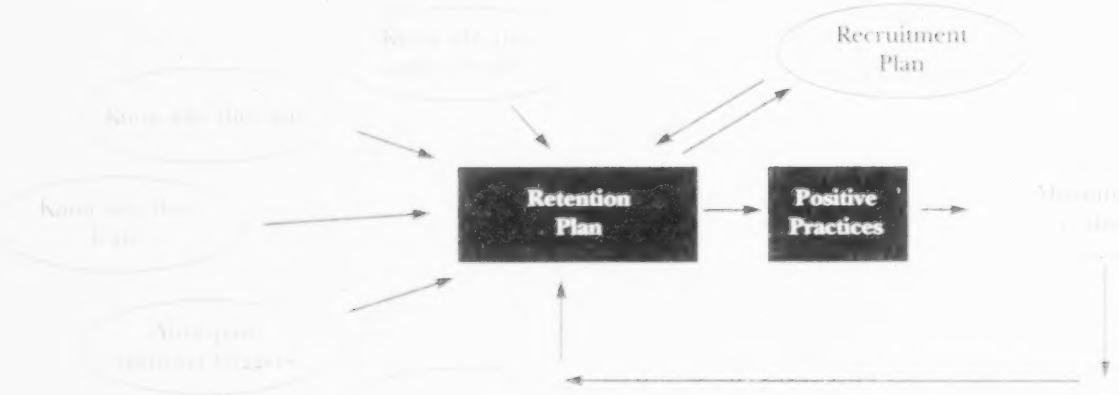

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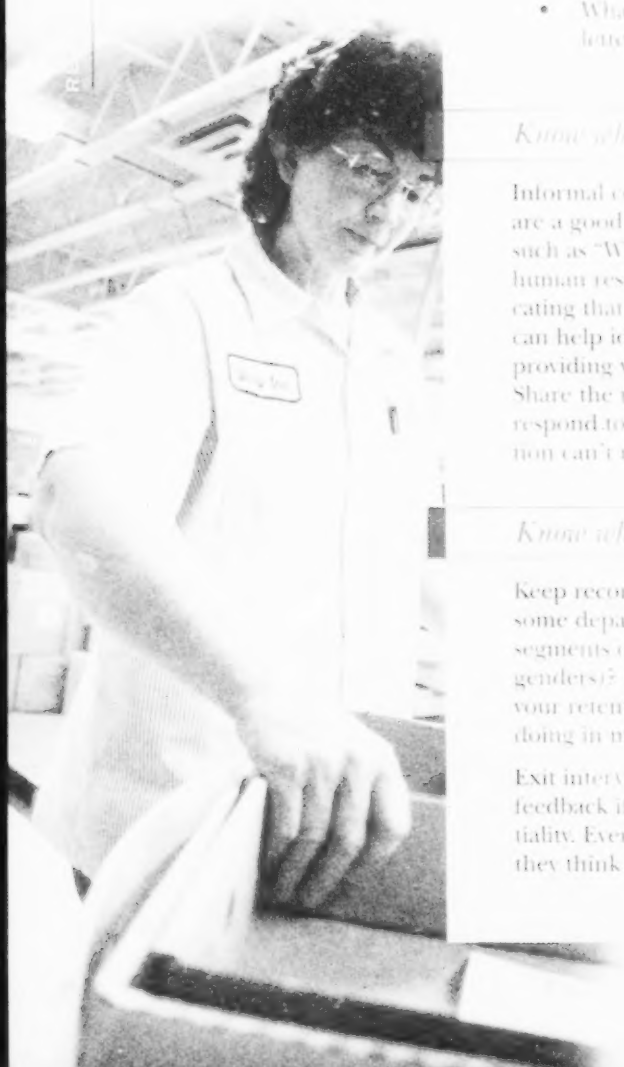
Good questions to ask at this point:

- How did you hear about us?
- Why did you apply to work here?
- List three pros and cons that occurred to you in considering our job offer?
- What was the "tipping point"—the thing that made you decide to join us?
- What can we improve (e.g. the job ad, interview, letter of offer, orientation)?

You can also learn from following up with people who declined your offer of employment. You may even be able to convince them to reapply at another time. Good questions to ask:

- Why did you agree to be interviewed?
- Why did you decline the offer?
- What would have made the difference to encourage you to accept the offer?
- Would you consider applying again in the future?
- What can we improve (e.g. the job ad, interview, letter of offer, orientation)?



Know why they stay

Informal conversations, formal interviews and staff satisfaction surveys are a good way to find out what is working well. Ask your staff questions such as "What keeps you here? What might entice you away? What human resource practice matters most to you?" In addition to communicating that you value them as employees, interviewing current employees can help identify and address individual needs and concerns while also providing valuable guidance for organization-wide retention strategies. Share the results of conversations and surveys with your staff. Be sure to respond to the feedback with action or an explanation why the organization can't respond.

Know why they leave

Keep records about turnover and look for patterns. Is turnover greater in some departments than others? In some occupational groups? In some segments of your employee population (e.g., certain ethnic groups or genders)? Use these results to help you formulate goals and targets for your retention plan, assign accountabilities and evaluate how you're doing in meeting those targets.

Exit interviews with employees who voluntarily resign may provide useful feedback if conducted by an impartial person with assurance of confidentiality. Even then many employees may hesitate to give honest feedback if they think it could be reflected in a poor reference.

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Exit interviews are especially important for high-value employees and may open the door to winning them back in the future. Good questions to ask:

- What is the main reason you resigned?
- What other reasons influenced your decision?
- Is there anything we could have done to encourage you to stay?
- What would bring you back?
- If you were the boss, what would you change?

Anticipate the turnover triggers

Some people leave due to a number of factors and a dissatisfaction that has built up over time. Others make that decision in response to a specific event or change in the workplace. These turnover "triggers" might be organization-wide (e.g. mergers, restructuring, changes in technology or location) or personal (a good friend left the company, a negative incident with a supervisor, a poor performance appraisal). As you plan and review changes in the workplace, consider who might be directly and negatively affected and take steps to ensure these events don't become their trigger points.

Know your options

This book presents a number of proven and creative retention strategies for you to consider. The best strategies are developed in consultation with your employees based on their ideas, insights and suggestions. You might also talk to business colleagues and consult any number of websites focusing on human resource practices. It will be important to consider and eventually select a mix of strategies that will be appropriate, manageable and valued by your employees.

Measure and evaluate

As the saying goes, "If you don't keep score, how do you know you're winning?" Your retention plan also needs to include steps to evaluate if the strategies you choose are working well. At the onset, ask yourself:

- How will I know the results?
- How will I know what it's costing me?
- How will I know if my staff supports this strategy?
- How can I improve it?

Then put measures in place to collect the information you need and establish timelines and accountabilities for collecting and analysing the data.

POSITIVE PRACTICES

The following is an overview of some strategies and approaches that have proven successful in a broad range of businesses and organizations. Key points and success measures are provided, based on research of effective practices. You may require more detailed research and professional expertise to guide you in implementing specific strategies.

Orientation and integration

First impressions are lasting impressions. A good orientation is an indispensable first step in ensuring that your new employee starts off on the right foot. Beyond getting the paperwork completed, this is an opportunity for you to communicate important information about the organization, your products or services, key corporate values, policies and procedures. Describe your expectations about this being a respectful workplace, and ensure new employees know you promote fair treatment and resolution of conflict. Let them know from the beginning that you have workplace policies regarding ethical practices and harassment. If done well, an orientation will instill confidence and motivation.

> **WE SPEND A LOT OF TIME** in orientation and training to give our people a good sense of company culture and clarify expectations and policies. We need our people to understand our philosophy and our culture.
>
> *–Manager, franchise restaurant, Red Deer*

The following checklist provides an overview of important topics to cover in an orientation. The orientation should include a tour of the worksite, introduction to co-workers and time for the new employee to ask questions and clarify expectations (yours and theirs). Make sure that all relevant personnel (co-workers, supervisors) know the new employee will be starting work that day and that their work space is prepared and supplied.

There is a lot to cover here—consider if your orientation could be phased in over several days.

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Orientation Checklist

The Organization

- ☐ History
- ☐ Products or services
- ☐ Customers
- ☐ Mission and values
- ☐ Organizational policies and expectations
- ☐ Organizational structure
- ☐ Facility layout (map, parking)
- ☐ Facility tour
- ☐ Names of key people
- ☐ Questions?

General Information for Employees

- ☐ Employee records
- ☐ Benefits
- ☐ Pay schedule
- ☐ Pay scales
- ☐ Vacations and holidays
- ☐ Sick leave and absentee policy
- ☐ Training and promotion policy
- ☐ Employee development opportunities
- ☐ Disciplinary policy
- ☐ Questions?

Job-Specific Information

- ☐ Job location
- ☐ Job description
- ☐ Job tasks
- ☐ Salary or wage information
- ☐ Probationary period
- ☐ Benefits
- ☐ Introduction to the work unit
- ☐ Safety requirements
- ☐ Operating procedures
- ☐ Work standards (performance criteria)
- ☐ Tools and equipment
- ☐ Hours of work, scheduled breaks
- ☐ Where to go for help
- ☐ Questions?

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Integration refers to the process of a new employee becoming a part of the family, so to speak—fitting in, becoming part of the work community and the local community. Fostering positive work relationships and a sense of belonging are key to retaining workers. Employees who are strongly connected to the workplace socially are less likely to want to leave. How can you encourage strong links among your employees?

- Introduce workers to the whole operation, not just their work unit.
- Explain how the work units relate to, serve and support each other.
- Set up mentoring or buddy systems, especially for new hires.
- Have regular staff meetings, with time for employees to talk.
- Plan staff social events (parties, breakfasts).
- Support employee clubs or recreational teams and volunteering in the community.
- Cross-train or create cross-functional teams.
- Provide new hires with information about community activities and resources.
- Encourage and support staff participation in community events.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO BE A PART of the community. We commit employee hours to building homes for Habitat for Humanity. We sponsor a local hockey team and a company ball team. We like to support the local clubs and organizations such as Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, the local construction association, safety association, minor sports and teams, etc. It is important to maintain a positive community presence.

–Owner, plumbing and heating contractor, Grande Prairie

WE ENCOURAGE OUR STAFF, and lead by example, to be involved in the community. We pay their dues to service clubs, for example. Why? It introduces themselves and our company to potential customers and clients. Secondly, it passes on our name and goodwill. We've had a hockey team for years, ringette…we budget a sizeable amount for fundraising for community efforts. It's part of who we are.

–Owner, home decorating centre, Red Deer

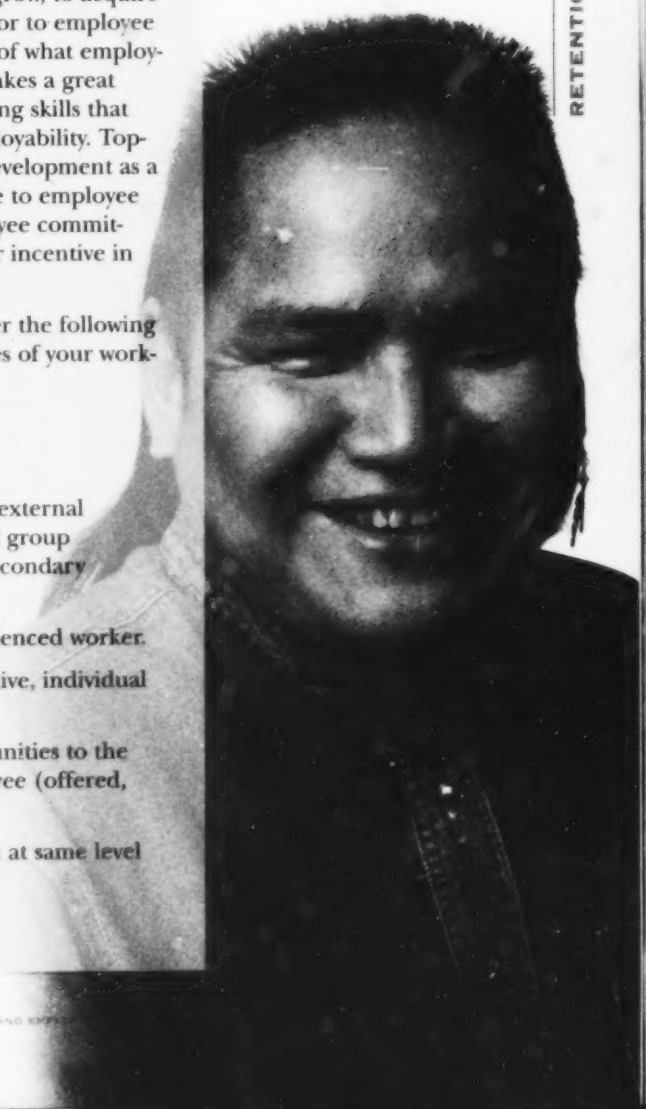
Training and development

Employee development—opportunities to learn and to grow, to acquire new skills, knowledge, or abilities—is a proven contributor to employee retention. Development opportunities rank high in lists of what employees look for in a job and in their descriptions of what makes a great workplace. Workers today are keenly interested in learning skills that will keep them employable and ensure their future employability. Top-performing companies consistently include employee development as a key strategic initiative. Training, which is just one avenue to employee development, has been demonstrated to increase employee commitment and is often treated as an important component or incentive in an offer of employment.

How can you develop the skills of your workers? Consider the following list of ways you can develop the skills, knowledge, abilities of your workforce, as well as their enthusiasm and commitment!

22 Paths to Employee Development

1. **Training.** Formal or informal, in-house seminars, external courses, one-on-one sessions, instructor-facilitated group instruction, web-based individual tutorials, post-secondary offerings—there is no shortage of options.
2. **Buddy system.** New hire partnered with an experienced worker.
3. **Feedback.** Formal, informal, consistent, constructive, individual and group, just-in-time, all the time.
4. **Job enrichment.** Add new challenges and opportunities to the current job, in close consultation with the employee (offered, not imposed!).
5. **Lateral moves.** Employee moves to a new position at same level of responsibility.



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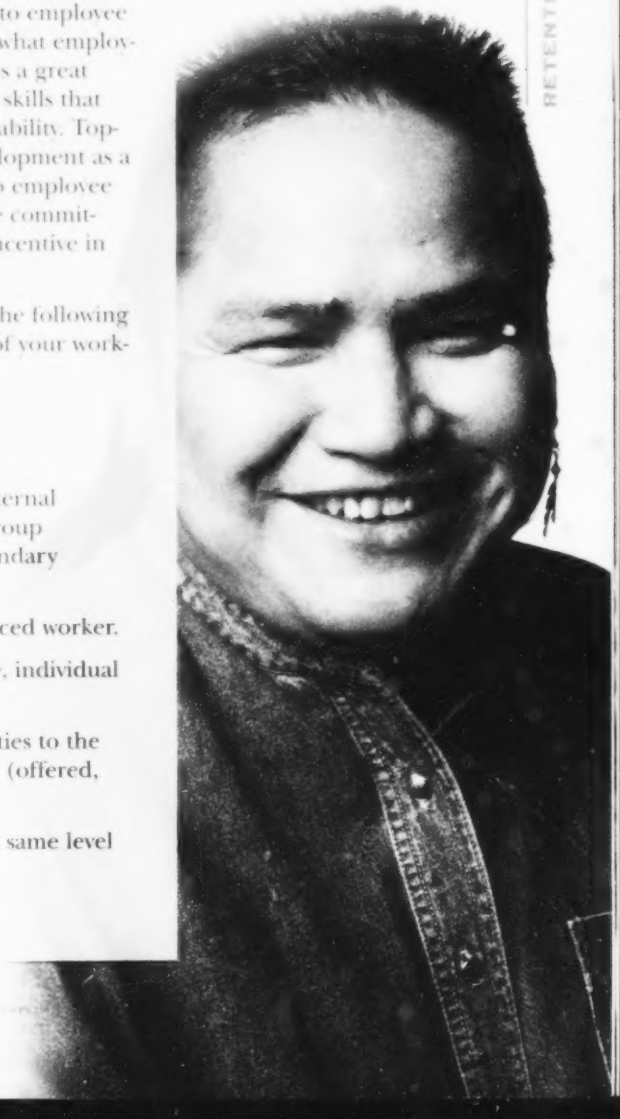

6. **Promotion.** Employee moves vertically, to a position of greater responsibility.
7. **Relocation.** Employee moves to a new facility or community.
8. **Cross-training.** Employee works in other positions or in other work areas for a period of time.
9. **Rotate jobs or assignments.** Some jobs or responsibilities rotate among workers.
10. **Coaching.** Supervisors, co-workers or external coaches assist employee with performance improvement, and enhance understanding of the organization.
11. **Mentoring.** Role models help employees to understand organizational values and goals and to explore organizational, career or personal transitions.
12. **Committee work.** Employee serves on or leads committees.
13. **Special projects.** Employee takes on new challenges.
14. **Teamwork.** Employee serves on or leads cross-functional or cross-divisional teams.
15. **Resource support.** Employee receives a range of supports for learning and working, including job aids, written documentation, employee handbooks, operating manuals or software tools for independent learning.
16. **Learning plans.** Employee develops an annual individualized learning plan with the employer, describing their goals and accountabilities.
17. **Career ladders.** Employer plans and communicates alternate paths to advancement.
18. **Tuition reimbursement.** Employer provides funds for employees to take approved training, to encourage learning.
19. **Professional connections.** Employer pays professional dues or supports attendance at industry conferences, with a requirement to report back on what was learned.
20. **Certify.** Employee earns 'credits' and works towards internal certification in work units or skill sets.
21. **Celebrate.** Employer recognizes, rewards and communicates employees' achievements in newsletters, annual award banquets.
22. **Walk the talk.** Employer demonstrates and communicates the value of continuing learning at all times, by all means, for all employees.

EVERY WEDNESDAY WE HAVE "brown bag college" where we take turns teaching each other something. So one time someone gets up and talks about how to make a CD Rom…how to get great ideas…how to do market research…. We all have different backgrounds and areas of expertise so we learn from each other.

–President, communications company, Lethbridge

Compensation and benefits

The compensation and benefits package you offer to employees is of course going to be an important factor in retaining good workers, especially those with "hot skills" in the labour market. High wages will attract people but will not keep them for long if other factors in the work environment are not favourable. The key is to pay fairly and equitably both from an internal and external perspective. How do you decide the value of a job? There are essentially four steps:

1. Analyse the job: what are the primary duties, responsibilities and working conditions of this position?
2. Determine internal equity: what does your organization pay for similar work, responsibility and working conditions?
3. Determine external equity: what's competitive in this industry and this labour market?
4. Apply one or a combination of three methods:
   - Competitive compensation—people paid the "going rate"
   - Retention-based compensation—the longer they stay, the more they earn
   - Performance-based compensation—pay based on how well the individual, team or organization performs.

How much should I pay?

Find Alberta wage and salary information at: *www.alis.gov.ab.ca/career/oi/alberta.asp*

YOU HAVE TO BE COMPETITIVE with compensation, but after that it all comes down to trust and respect.

–Owner, software design company, Edmonton

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   - Performance-based compensation—pay based on how well the individual, team or organization performs.

How much should I pay?

Find Alberta wage and salary information at: *www.alis.gov.ab.ca/career/oi/alberta.asp*

YOU HAVE TO BE COMPETITIVE with compensation, but after that it all comes down to trust and respect.

–Owner, software design company, Edmonton

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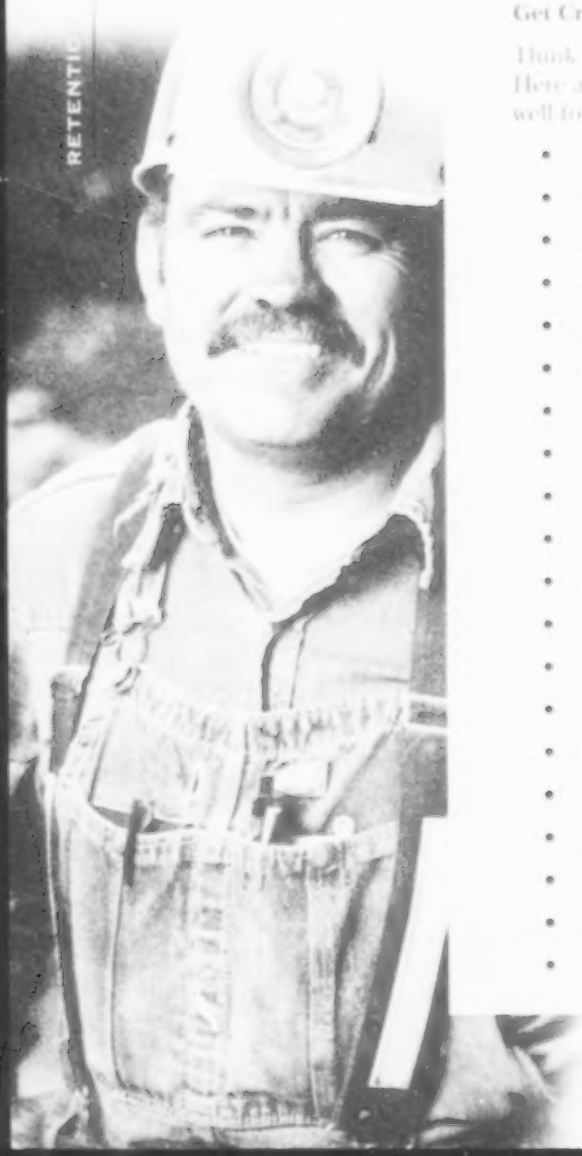

Benefits are also an important part of your employment offer. How do you decide what benefits to include? Again, you will need to find out what your employees value and what is being offered by your competitors. Applicants who declined your offer can also provide a useful critique of the benefits you provide.

Traditional benefits (e.g. medical, dental, retirement) can help to increase employee retention by communicating that you care about their personal needs. Here are a few tips to help employees understand the value of the benefits:

- Explain what is required by law and what you provide, over and above that.
- Explain the benefit package clearly.
- Include information about the dollar value of these benefits, and what your organization invests in benefits on their behalf.
- If possible, adopt a flexible benefit plan that allows employees some choice in creating a package that meets their needs.

Get Creative!

Think about your employees and what might be meaningful to them. Here are some benefits and creative worksite practices that have worked well for other companies. What will work for you?

- anniversary cakes with a $100 coupon for every year worked
- barbeques on-site
- bereavement leave
- casual dress days
- concierge services (for errands)
- contributions to employees' charity of choice
- "cool" (innovative, fun) office environment
- counselling services
- discounts on corporate products or services
- eldercare assistance
- employee assistance programs
- a $50 bonus for a cost-savings suggestion
- financial planning services
- flex time
- free or subsidized beverages (water cooler, coffee)
- free or subsidized food
- free or subsidized parking
- housing allowance
- one-hour job swap on Friday afternoons
- on-site cafeteria

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- on-site childcare
- on-site fitness facilities or paid memberships
- on-site health clinics, massage therapy
- personal computer loans
- personal leave days
- plant a tree on the property for each new employee
- scholarships for children of employees
- sick child days
- staff functions, parties, social events
- staff lotteries (e.g. perfect attendance earns you a ticket)
- stock options
- sunny Fridays (working extra each day to earn the fourth Friday off)
- telecommuting
- sabbaticals earned after 10 years
- time off to volunteer in the community
- "toys": basketball court on site, video games in the lunchroom
- training account for *any* self-development (even basket weaving!)
- tuition reimbursements
- wellness programs (e.g. weight loss, smoking cessation)

> **A LOT OF OUR PEOPLE HAVE "ISSUES".** If they're preoccupied with stuff at home, they can't do good work here. They may not even be able to get to work. We bring in social workers two days a week to help out workers with personal or legal issues, paperwork, whatever they need.
>
> *–HR manager, poultry plant, Edmonton*

Recognition and rewards

If you could read the minds of your employees, what questions would you hear them asking? "Does anybody notice?" "Does anyone care?" "Does it really make a difference?" Your employees need to know that the answer to each of these questions is a resounding "YES!"

Are your employees doing great work?

Tell them:
- often
- sincerely
- specifically
- privately
- publicly
- verbally
- on paper

Here are some tips to get you started:

- *Ask yourself.* How would you like to be thanked or rewarded?
- *Ask them.* How would your employees like to be recognized or rewarded?
- *Keep it personal.* What is meaningful to one employee might not be to another. If possible, allow a choice of rewards.
- *It might be cultural.* What is an honour in your culture might not be in another.
- *It should be timely.* Reinforce cause and effect by rewarding the desired performance as soon as possible.
- *It could be fun.* Some companies have stuffed animals or banners that move around to the next person or place of honour.
- *It might even pay.* Cash or gift certificates, small or large rewards, a contribution to the employee's charity of choice—the investment you make can earn you a significant return in worker morale and performance.
- *Or it might not cost a dime.* A simple thank you goes a long way. More freedom, more trust, more responsibility or a new work challenge can all be real and valued rewards for doing a great job.

I HAD BEEN WORKING long hours on a project. My manager wrote me a personal thank you, including gift certificates for a movie and popcorn and told me to take my wife and kids out to thank them for all the time I'd been away from home. I was proud to show that card to my family and to include them in the treat.

–Communications manager, human services agency, Calgary

WE HAVE ON-THE-SPOT-SAFETY AWARDS. If a supervisor sees someone following good safety practices, he can walk up to them right then and give them a $20 gift certificate.

–HR manager, meat processing plant, High River

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WE HAD A PROGRAM where you could earn cash awards if you suggested improvements that improved customer service, saved money or reduced workload. I had some suggestions for how to change some reporting procedures that earned me some pocket money and saved them a lot more.

–Administrative assistant, financial institution, Lethbridge

ONE OF THE PEOPLE I work for found out it was my birthday. She gave me a gift certificate for a massage and facial at a local spa with a beautiful handwritten note. The words on the card were so thoughtful and sincere—that meant even more than the gift! She didn't have to do that—she pays me for what I do. It was just so nice to be appreciated.

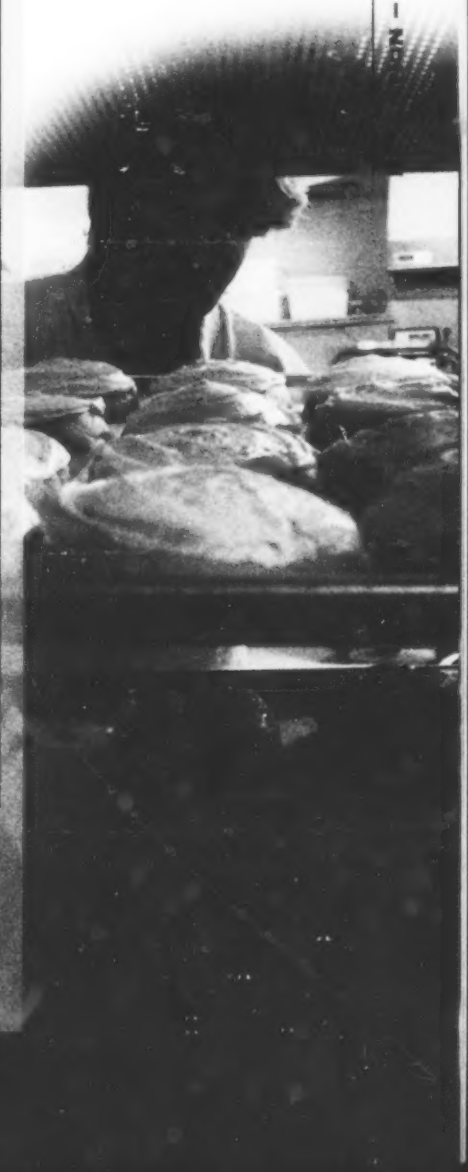
–Personal services provider, self-employed, Calgary

I HAD JUST FINISHED A GREAT DEAL of work on implementing a new computer system. I came in one day to find a beautiful bouquet of roses on my desk. That was 16 years ago and I still remember it. It sure felt good. I've been retired eight years now and they still invite me to the annual staff barbeque.

–Payroll clerk, municipal office, Southern Alberta

WE RESERVE A PRIME PARKING SPOT for the employee of the month and post their name and picture right inside the door.

–Production supervisor, furniture manufacturer, Calgary



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I GAVE EACH TEAM $250 to spend in a shopping spree at a toy department store, with two provisos: they had to buy social toys not private toys and they had twenty minutes to spend it... We've done paint ball, laser tag...scavenger hunts with prizes... competitions...gift exchanges. Once, when an outdoor equipment company opened up across the road, everyone had to go shopping and spend a specific amount of money within a certain period of time.

–President, design and communications company, Edmonton

WE PAY BONUSES FOR CERTAIN hard-to-fill positions such as registered nurses coming to work in rural Alberta. The bonuses are a flat amount paid to the person who accepts the job: half paid after the first 950 hours and the other half paid after a further 950 hours. We also pay relocation expenses (with proof of receipt) in applicable cases. The relocation expense payment can vary, depending on whether relocation is from within Alberta, from Western Canada, or from outside of Western Canada. We offer complimentary rent for three months, if available.

–HR coordinator, health services sector, High Prairie

Performance management

Employees' perceptions of performance management can have a strong influence on retention. Employees who understand the performance management process and feel it is well managed recognize the connection between their contributions and organizational goals. Perceptions of fair and effective evaluations will increase employee commitment and reduce turnover.

Performance management provides a strategic approach to business planning. The cycle begins when the organization defines its annual business goals. Using input from stakeholders (e.g. customers, co-workers, partners), operational strategies and measures are developed. Individual performance plans are then created that link the employees' work to the goals of the organization.

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Characteristics include:

- clear links to strategic business goals and planning
- clear communication of all aspects of the process
- clearly defined expectations, roles and responsibilities
- consistent, job-relevant criteria
- a focus on learning, setting realistic and measurable goals
- a focus on strengths, not just areas for improvement
- feedback from multiple sources (e.g. supervisors, direct reports and peers)
- year-round implementation and application
- training, coaching, monitoring and evaluation of evaluators.

Effective performance assessment occurs on a regular basis. Provide your employees with on-going and meaningful behavioural feedback in a way that recognizes good performance and provides constructive suggestions when improvement is required.

The annual *performance appraisal* is an important element in performance management. This is your opportunity to re-cap performance discussions held throughout the year and focus on future goals and development. It includes the following four steps:

1. Set performance expectations at the beginning of the cycle.
2. Monitor and coach throughout the appraisal period.
3. Meet for a performance appraisal to review accomplishments at the end of the cycle.
4. Set expectations and a new developmental plan for the next cycle.

Tips for Positive Performance Appraisals

- Send advance notice of the time, place and purpose of the review meeting.
- Plan on private, uninterrupted time with the employee.
- Ask the employee to prepare by completing a standard, self-assessment form or answering a standard set of questions.
- Prepare yourself by obtaining current and accurate information about the performance expectations of the position and about the performance of the individual.
- Put the employee at ease: encourage dialogue and negotiation rather than prescription of performance goals and measures.
- Focus on development: positive, actionable steps designed to meet performance expectations.

Characteristics include:

- clear links to organizational goals and objectives
- clear communication of the purpose of the process
- clearly defined expectations and responsibilities
- consistent principles and criteria
- a focus on learning, training, and development needs
- a focus on strengths, not weaknesses
- feedback from multiple sources (e.g., supervisor, direct reports, and peers)
- continual improvement of the process
- training, coaching, counseling, and development as outcomes

Effective performance assessments help employees understand what they can do to contribute to the organization and how they can better do their jobs. It is a way that recognizes good performance and rewards it, and it encourages suggestions when improvement is required.

The annual *performance appraisal* is an important part of the performance management process. This is the opportunity to review performance discussions held throughout the year, and to review future goals and development.

1. Set performance expectations at the beginning of the cycle.
2. Monitor and track performance throughout the appraisal period.
3. Measure performance compared to the expectations and accomplishments of the employee.
4. Set expectations and provide development opportunities for the next cycle.

Tips for Positive Performance Appraisals

- Send advance notice of the time, place, and purpose of the review discussion.
- Plan on providing support and encouragement.
- Ask the employee to prepare for the appraisal, a standard self-assessment form is available with suggested questions.
- Prepare yourself by reviewing past records and gathering information about the performance expectations of the position and about the performance of the employee.
- Put the employee at ease and establish rapport and negotiation rather than pass judgment or give assessments, scores, and measures.
- Focus on development (personal action plans) designed to meet performance expectations.

- Balance negative with positive comments, focus on strengths as well as weaknesses.
- Document the results of your meeting.
- Arrange for regular communication in between review periods.

Work-life balance

Work-life balance refers to the process of balancing the many roles and responsibilities we have at work, such as employee, supervisor, subordinate or coworker, with the roles we have outside of work, such as parent, child, sibling, spouse, neighbour or friend. When our roles and responsibilities in one of these areas begin to limit our ability to manage roles and responsibilities in the other, work-life balance is compromised.

Research shows that maintaining an appropriate balance is getting harder, not easier, for the average Canadian. Increased workloads and hours of work, technology that allows work to follow you home, the "sandwich generation" faced with the needs of aging parents and children at the same time are some of the challenges facing employees. A growing number of workers are identifying work-life balance as one of their top priorities in deciding whether to leave their current job or accept a new position.

What can you offer your workers in promoting a healthy work-life balance? Start by getting to know your workers on a personal level. Ask employees "What would make a difference?" Then consider options such as:

- flexible work schedules
- job sharing
- part-time work
- shortened work weeks
- telecommuting
- job redesign
- work redesign (redistribution of tasks)
- transportation provided or paid for
- childcare facilities
- eldercare assistance
- employee assistance programs
- extended parental leave
- flexibility in vacation (when taken, how divided up)
- special leaves or personal days (e.g. bereavement, child's graduation)
- allowing employees to bank hours for later use
- allowing employees to decline overtime

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- allowing employees to handle personal matters during work time, when necessary, and trusting them to make up the lost time
- emphasizing and communicating the importance of balance
- serving as a good role model yourself.

> **RESPECT FAMILY LIFE** and the importance of "off time" to each individual's personal well-being. The time they spend with their family and friends contributes to their positive attitude in the workplace.
>
> *–Owner, automotive repair shop, Lethbridge*

Employee communication and participation

Keeping employees "in the loop"—communicating and collaborating in problem solving, planning and decision-making—is one of the characteristics of high performance workplaces. These workplaces know the benefits of involving employees in discussions that affect them, sharing information, establishing working groups of employees with similar objectives, and allocating time at work to ensure discussions and socialization.

In the workplace, "no news is bad news." Not communicating with employees encourages second-guessing, mistrust and an active rumour mill. Communicate early and often using a mix of strategies, including:

- **Communication.** Keep managers and supervisors well informed.
- **Open-door policy.** Encourage employees to approach managers and supervisors with ideas, concerns, questions.
- **Open-book policy.** Let employees know what's going on; strategic plans, key decisions.
- **Corporate newsletters.** Communicate, highlight, profile, explain, celebrate, promote, respond to employee questions, interviews with the supervisor or employee of the month.
- **Staff memos.** Post them, include them with the paycheque, place them beside the time clock.
- **Lunchroom bulletin board(s).** Ordered, sectioned, regularly updated with space for employees to post personal notices.
- **Employee suggestion box.** Anonymous, easily accessed, regularly checked and responded to in a positive and public way (e.g. newsletter, staff meeting).
- **Employee surveys.** Anonymous, confidential, using a validated survey tool, results reported to all staff, result in action (don't ask for the sake of asking).

- **Regular staff meetings.** Work unit and company-wide, with opportunity and encouragement for employees to hear and be heard.
- **Toolbox meetings.** Quick, ad hoc meetings in a work unit to address an emergent concern or problem or communicate something new (e.g. safety issue, debrief on a recent incident).
- **Employee focus groups.** Work unit or cross-functional groups called together for a specific purpose (e.g. co-develop a job description, brainstorm a solution).
- **360° feedback.** Input on performance from direct reports, supervisors, peers, team-members, internal and external customers.

> **WE HAVE BEEN AN OPEN-BOOK** management company for seven years now and it has cut our turnover by half. Everyone is involved and educated from a trades point of view and from a business point of view. Each business unit sets their own goals and all of the people involved work towards achieving the goals the team set out.... Loyalty has been a key outcome.
>
> *–President/CEO, manufacturer, Lethbridge*

Safe, fair and healthy workplaces

Maintaining employee health and safety is an important factor in employee retention. You'll want to communicate this value and "walk the talk" by providing the necessary tools, equipment, training, time and support to work safely. Alberta has legislated requirements that outline both employer and worker responsibilities for protecting health and safety at work. For example, employers must train workers in first aid and are required to measure hazards such as noise.

While the legislation outlines what you *must* do, there is a program that can help employers and workers voluntarily build effective health and safety programs. The *Partnerships in Health and Safety Program* can help you to reduce workplace injuries and illnesses. In addition to more program information, you can also find InfoSheets at **www.whs.gov.ab.ca**

Health and safety at your workplace goes beyond safe work practices. It also extends to policies that protect employees from harassment and from potentially dangerous or violent situations.

What's a "fair" workplace? It goes without saying that a fair workplace is based upon the *Employment Standards Code and Regulation*, which sets minimum standards of employment for employees and employers. These standards include payment of earnings, minimum wage, hours of work, days of rest, overtime pay, vacations and general holiday pay, maternity and parental benefits, notice of pay due upon termination of employment and restrictions on the employment of employees under 18 years of age.

As well, a fair workplace is one where employees are treated equitably and know the rules and the expectations that apply to their work. Fair workplaces make the most of their employees so they all have opportunities to realize their full potential.

Workplace wellness is a broad term that incorporates a host of strategies to support good physical and mental health. If you look back at each of the positive practices profiled in this section, you will find that many of the suggestions contribute directly or indirectly to employee wellness. This includes reducing stress, balancing work and life commitments, ensuring employees feel valued and appreciated and providing benefits like flexible hours. If your approach is to pick and choose from the practices outlined in this section, look again to ensure that employee wellness is an important consideration in your workplace.

Treating people equitably does not always mean treating them equally.

An information sheet and interpretive bulletin on Duty to Accommodate is available from the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission, listed in the *Resource and Tools* section.

Manager training and accountability

One of the most critical factors in employee satisfaction, commitment and retention is the quality and effectiveness of managers, particularly one's direct supervisor. All of the positive practices and best intentions for employee retention are pointless if they are not understood, modeled, monitored and enforced by managers up and down the line. Key strategies to ensure all is not lost at this pivotal point:

- **Build the case.** Ensure your managers know why retention is a priority.
- **Get the data.** Collect and communicate information from employee surveys, exit interviews, turnover rates and resulting costs for their work unit.
- **Train, train, train.** Train managers in retention strategies and skills that support retention, such as effective communication, coaching and mentoring.
- **Hold managers accountable.** Set goals and measures and tie departmental budgets or compensation and bonuses to turnover rates.
- **Supply the resources.** Provide the tools, time and authority to make retention a priority.

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Saying goodbye

It's a fact—even with all of the best practices in place, some employees are still going to leave. You cannot control all of the factors that go into an individual's decision to seek employment elsewhere. Turnover is not always a bad thing—some people should leave, and turnover provides an opportunity to welcome new team members with fresh ideas and insights. The key is to manage the factors that are within your control and to take the opportunity to learn from each departing employee. Remember that this person may still be a member of your community, profession or industry, and may even be your customer. They will talk to people you know. Do everything you can to ensure that you part on the best possible terms, and you may even leave the door open to welcome them back.

IF SOMEONE DOES HAVE to leave our organization, let's leave them as friends and customers!

–Manager, franchise restaurant, Red Deer

HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE EMPLOYER

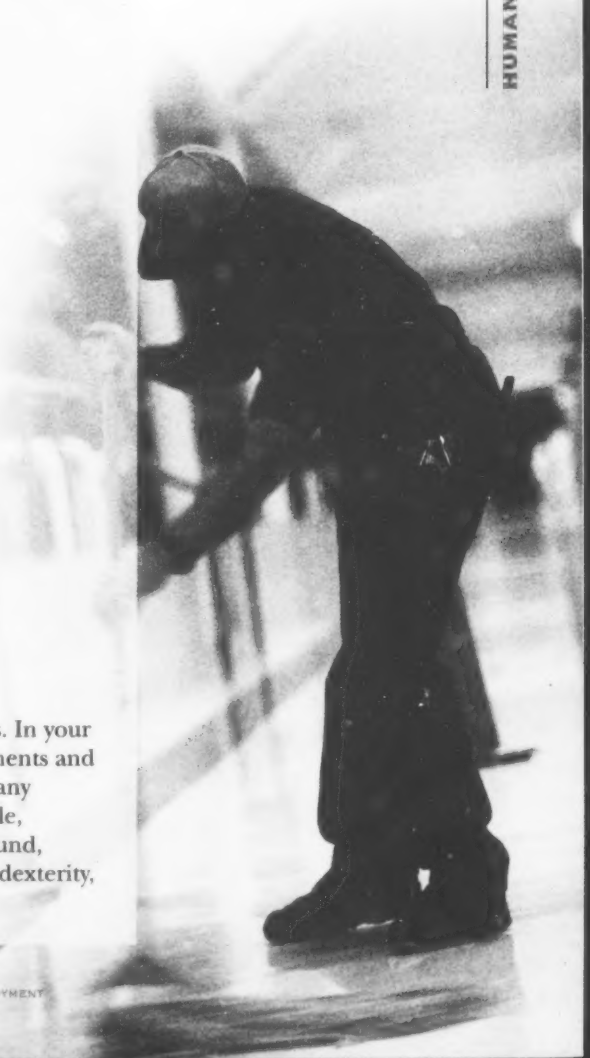
6

Federal, provincial and municipal legislation spell out the rights and responsibilities of employers and employees in Alberta. Alberta's *Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act* is one of these laws. It safeguards the equality rights of Albertans by prohibiting discrimination and harassment on protected grounds and in certain areas of activity such as employment. Most businesses in Alberta fall under the jurisdiction of this act.

The *Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act* protects people from harassment and discrimination in employment on the following grounds:

- race
- religious beliefs
- colour
- gender
- physical disability
- mental disability
- age
- ancestry
- place of origin
- marital status
- source of income
- family status
- sexual orientation.

Discrimination should not occur in any stage of employment.



RECRUITMENT

Your hiring and recruitment practices should be free from bias. In your advertised job descriptions, clearly state bona fide job requirements and use gender-neutral wording. Employers are not allowed to ask any questions that contravene human rights legislation. For example, questions about an applicant's medical history, ethnic background, marital or family status, or gender are not permitted. Tests for dexterity,

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The Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission provides educational sessions and materials to assist employers to prevent discrimination. For more specific information about human rights issues, or to find out more about educational presentations and resources, consult the Commission's website at **www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca** or contact one of the Commission's offices listed in the *Resources and Tools* section.

medical exams for physical ability, or stress-handling tests must be job-related. Drug testing may or may not be permitted. Applicants should be advised that, once hired, they might be required to pass such tests or exams.

EMPLOYMENT

Workplaces should be free of harassment. Employers, managers, supervisors and employees should understand what type of behaviours constitute harassment and should not practice it or allow it, under any circumstances.

Workplace practices, policies and procedures should treat people equitably. As an employer, you have a legal duty to take reasonable steps, in policies or conditions of work, to accommodate an employee's individual needs if they relate to the grounds protected under the Act. For example, an employee may be unable to work on a particular day because it conflicts with the religious beliefs of the employee. In such cases, you must try to resolve the conflict in a way that is agreeable to both parties, short of undue hardship.

TERMINATION OR SEVERANCE

An employee cannot be terminated if the reason for termination relates to any of the grounds protected under the legislation. For example, you cannot terminate a woman because she is pregnant. Unsatisfactory employee performance, unexcused absences or other factors may be cause for termination.

7 Resources and Tools

The following listings are a sample of the resources available to assist employers with information, services and programs. Each resource will lead you to others for additional information.

Resources— Government of Alberta

Alberta Community Development

Helps Albertans to participate fully in the social, cultural and economic life of the province. Website: **www.cd.gov.ab.ca**

Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission

Advice, information, educational resources and programs to foster equality and reduce discrimination, and resolve human rights complaints related to employment and other areas. Free electronic newsletter with human rights and diversity events, services, publications and news updates. Confidential Inquiry Lines: Northern Regional Office, Edmonton (780) 427-7661. Southern Regional Office, Calgary (403) 297-6571. To call toll-free within Alberta, dial 310-0000 and then enter the area code and phone number.

Website: **www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca**

Alberta Economic Development

Contains economic sector profiles and other information for businesses. Provides economic immigration programs.
Website: **www.alberta-canada.com**

Alberta Provincial Nominee Program

Designed to help employers meet critical skill shortages, this employer-driven immigration program is operated by the government of Alberta in conjunction with Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Employers unable to fill skilled positions with Canadian residents may apply for approval to recruit a specified number of foreign candidates to fill these positions.

Website: **www.alberta-canada.com/pnp/**

Alberta Human Resources and Employment (AHRE)

Information on careers and the labour market, Alberta's employment standards, workplace health and safety, mediation services, facilitation and other workplace information.

Call the **Alberta Career Information Hotline** at 1-800-661-3753 for the AHRE service centre nearest you. Further information about programs and services is available at: **www.gov.ab.ca/hre**

Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS)

The Internet gateway to career, learning and employment information in Alberta. Includes labour market bulletins and news, provincial growth trends and statistics, and occupational profiles.

Website: **www.alis.gov.ab.ca**

Canada-Alberta Job Order Bank Services (JOBS)

Helps connect employers and job seekers by displaying job vacancies. Job Bank for Employers lets employers post their job openings free of charge through the Internet.

Website: **www.alis.gov.ab.ca/employment/jp**

Employment Standards

Provides minimum standards of employment for employers and employees in the workplace. You can get a free copy of the Employment Standards Guide by phoning the office or visiting the website. Outside Edmonton call the toll-free province-wide number at 310-0000, then dial 427-3731. In Edmonton dial 427-3731.

Website: **www.gov.ab.ca/hre/employmentstandards**

Workplace Health and Safety

There is help for employers and workers in workplace health and safety in Alberta. If you have a question or concern, talk to the experts. More than 200 free publications are available on the website or by phone request. The Call Centre staff can also answer your questions about health and safety at work. Phone toll-free: 1-866-415-8690.

Website: **www.whs.gov.ab.ca**

Youth Connections

Alberta Human Resources and Employment funds Youth Connections offices across Alberta. Your business can recruit young people through Youth Connections job boards. Training options include work experience, mentoring, job shadowing opportunities and others. Call the Career Information Hotline at 1-800-661-3753 for the office closest to you.

Website: **www.youthconnections.gov.ab.ca**

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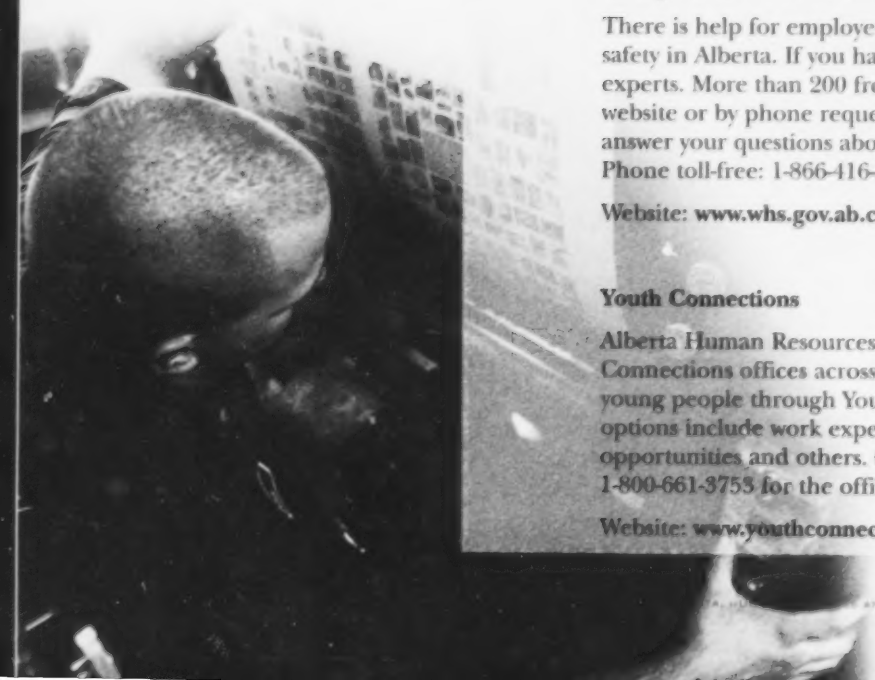

Alberta Learning

Contact **Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training** offices to inquire about training in apprenticeship programs, including the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) for youth. Call the Career Information Hotline at 1-800-661-3753 for the office closest to you.

Website: **www.tradesecrets.org**

Service Alberta

For general inquiries on Alberta government programs and services call Service Alberta toll-free at 310-0000 (anywhere in Alberta). Phone lines are open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday; voice mail is available after hours. Outside of Alberta, call long distance at (780) 427-2711 or visit the Service Alberta website.

Website: **www.servicealberta.ca**

RESOURCES— GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC)

Provides Alberta labour market information and external links to websites of interest to employers, job seekers and entrepreneurs.
Website: **www.hrdc.gc.ca**

Human Resources Management

An on-line one-stop information source designed to help small- to medium-sized employers in meeting their human resource related needs and developing their business management skills.

Website: **www.employers.gc.ca**

Temporary Foreign Worker Program

This program allows a person who is not a permanent resident or Canadian citizen to live in Canada temporarily, with an employment authorization. Employers apply to HRDC for a job validation on behalf of the applicant. When validation is approved, the applicant applies to Citizenship and Immigration Canada for employment authorization.

RESOURCES—
HUMAN RESOURCE ASSOCIATIONS

Human Resources Institute of Alberta

This association promotes, encourages and maintains a professional standard of human resource management practices through the development and certification of practitioners in Alberta. Member associations are located in communities throughout Alberta.
Website: **www.HRIA.ab.ca**

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS

Associations provide a number of services to their members that may include general association information, job banks, professional development and training, certification, licensing and networking opportunities. Consider the advantages of connecting with other employers. Check *Associations, Societies & Foundations* in the yellow pages of your phone book.

The Alliance of Sector Councils (TASC)

Sector councils bring together representatives from business, labour, education, and other professional groups to address sector-wide human resource issues. TASC helps sector councils link to key government departments and promotes the value of a sectoral approach to meeting labour market needs across Canada. A list of councils is available on-line.
Website: **www.councils.org**

RESOURCES—
ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES

Alberta Chambers of Commerce

A federation of 126 Chambers of Commerce, representing over 22,000 businesses, the Alberta Chambers of Commerce assists members in expanding their business potential.
Website: **www.abchamber.ca**

Job Quality

Managed by the Work Network of Canadian Policy Research Networks, this website provides information and tools to guide employers in the use of employment quality indicators for a range of human resource management and performance measurement purposes.
Website: **www.jobquality.ca**

National Quality Institute

The *Canadian Healthy Workplace Criteria*, available as a free download, is a resource that defines clear criteria under five key themes: leadership, planning, people focus, process management and outcomes.
Website: **www.nqi.ca**

WORKink Alberta

Dedicated to the employment of persons with disabilities, and provides services for employers. Employment vacancies can be posted on this site. Website: **www.ab.workink.com**

RESOURCES—PUBLICATIONS

The following materials from Alberta Human Resources and Employment are available free of charge in print and electronic formats to Alberta and NWT employers.

Alberta Careers Update. This book looks at the global and provincial trends affecting Alberta's economy and society. These trends have an impact on occupations in the province and can affect your business planning decisions.

Diversity: A strategy to meet your need for skilled workers. How do you as a business owner fill shortages of skilled workers? Consider recruiting and retaining a diversified workforce. This book offers a sound business case and advice for hiring Aboriginal workers, immigrants, older workers, persons with disabilities, visible minorities and youth.

Employment Series for Persons with Disabilities: Tips for Employers. Today, more and more employers are hiring persons with disabilities. This book provides employers with a practical business approach, answers to typical concerns and questions, and resources.

Rejuvenating Your Business. This informative book explains why businesses need the mix of experienced and youthful staff to be viable in today's economy. It explains positive reasons for hiring youth and shows how to recruit, train, motivate and keep the best workers of the next generation.

To get your copy use any of the following options:

- Check the e-CareerShop website at **www.alis.gov.ab.ca/careershop**
- Call the Alberta Career Information Hotline at 1-800-661-3753.
- Visit an Alberta Human Resources and Employment service centre or Youth Connections office. Call the Alberta Career Information Hotline for the centre nearest you.

Tools

The following four documents have been developed as tools for employers. They can be used as examples or personalized to suit your business needs.

- Calculating Turnover Costs
- Sample Job Description
- Tracking Recruitment Results
- Applicant Rating Guide

They are on the ALIS website at **www.alis.gov.ab.ca/careershop** (click on *Finders & Keepers*) and can be downloaded for easy access and changes.

Calculating Turnover Costs

Direct Costs	# Hours	Hourly rate	Total
Termination			
Separation processing – administrative support			
Separation processing – management			
Exit interviews – human resources staff or external consultant			
Severance pay			
Accrued vacation			
Continued benefits			
Vacancy			
Temporary help – wages			
Temp agency services			
Overtime for co-workers			
Recruitment			
Writing job ad			
Running job ad			
Third party recruiter fees			
Other (e.g. referral bonus)			
Selection and hiring			
Application screening			
Interviewing			
Reference check			
Finalizing employee contract			
Relocation			
Other (e.g., signing bonus)			
Orientation and training			
New hire processing (e.g. benefits set up)			
Orientation			
Orientation materials and employee literature			
Uniforms and equipment			
In-house training or coaching			
Training materials			
External training			
Other (e.g. licensing, certification fees)			
Total of Direct Costs			

Direct Costs	% Reduction	# Hours	Hourly rate	Total
Lost productivity of incumbent, prior to departure				
Lost productivity of co-workers or subordinates				
Lost productivity/time of supervisor during vacancy				
Lost productivity/time of supervisor during orientation & training				
Lost productivity of new hire during transition (initially)				
Lost productivity of new hire during transition (subsequently)				
Increased defects/operating errors during vacancy or transition				
Dissatisfied or lost customers during vacancy or transition				
Total of Indirect Costs				
Total Costs of Turnover *(Direct + Indirect)*				$

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION — CAD TECHNOLOGIST

Job Title: CAD Technologist

Reports to: Vice President

Department: Drafting

Location: Edmonton

Job Summary

Under the general supervision of the Vice President, the CAD Technologist utilizes AutoCAD to produce various types of land agreement plans (based on digital field data and surveyor's notes) that become part of the legal fabric of Alberta.

Job Duties

- Reviews digital survey information, field notes and sketches to determine what the information is indicating and what approach needs to be taken to create a comprehensive plan.
- Researches and locates existing map data (maps and other published information) to support the creation of new plans. Reviews plans to determine what information must be incorporated into the new plan to tie the information into currently published information.
- (Etc.)

Customer Contact

- Very limited customer contact

Education and Experience Required

- Diploma from recognized technical school in AutoCAD or Survey Technology
- Training in AutoCAD
- No to minimal work experience is required

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required

- Knowledge of legal fabric of the province i.e. townships, ranges and meridians is required
- Organizational skills
- Strong attention to detail; meticulous
- Patience
- Ability to create aesthetically pleasing and useable drawings
- Math (geometry) skills

Working Conditions

- Work is completed in an interior office environment and requires working on a computer the vast majority of the day.

Tracking Recruitment Results

Recruitment strategy	Cost	# Responses	# Interviewed	# Hired	Average response time	Cost per hire (Cost ÷ # hired)

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Applicant Rating Guide

Name of Applicant: _____

Directions:

1. Write important skills or competencies in the left hand column.
2. Assign a percentage for each skill based on how important it is to the job.
3. Rate the applicant for each skill by putting a ✔ in one of the numbered columns.
4. Multiply the rating (at the top of each column) by the percentage and record the result in the right hand column.
5. Total all numbers in the right hand column to arrive at the applicant's summary rating.

Key skills or competencies	Weight (%)	(1) Poor	(2) Fair	(3) Good	(4) Strong	(5) Exceptional	Skill rating
		Very little or very basic; would require considerable support	Some but limited; would require some training and support	Proven track record; may require limited or occasional support	Demonstrated expertise; could function well and independently from the start	Outstanding qualifications; expert level; able to coach or train others	

APPLICANT RATING GUIDE

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Directions:

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Total Rating							

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FEEDBACK

We'd Like to Hear From You ...

Finders & Keepers
Recruitment and Retention Strategies

Date .....

Did you find the information in this publication useful?
In what way?

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How could we improve it?

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Do you have any suggestions for other products that would be of value to you?

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Would You Like to Receive a Catalogue of Our Products?

Name .....

Organization .....

Address .....

..... Postal Code .....

Phone ..... FAX .....

Please return this form to
People, Skills and Workplace Resources
Alberta Human Resources and Employment
12th floor, 10030–107 Street, South Tower
Edmonton, AB T5J 3E4
Fax: 780-422-5319

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Notes

Explore your options on-line for Career, Learning and Employment information

www.alis.gov.ab.ca

- Career planning
- Education and training
- Occupational information
- Students finance
- Scholarships
- Job postings

Alberta
HUMAN RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT
LEARNING

About Finders & Keepers

Recruitment and Retention Strategies

This book is written for employers. It will help you address skilled labour shortages in an increasingly tight labour market.

It presents:

- the business case to consider the cost of employee turnover
- information to help you plan how to attract, recruit, select and retain workers
- positive practices and strategies to help you attract, recruit, select and retain workers
- further information and resources.

> **THE MANAGEMENT STYLE** of the company can make a big difference. You have to be willing to accept new ideas and to go to your employees and challenge them to think outside the box... and to listen to what they have to say.
>
> *– HR Manager, geophysical contractor, Calgary*

Alberta
HUMAN RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT
the people & workplace department